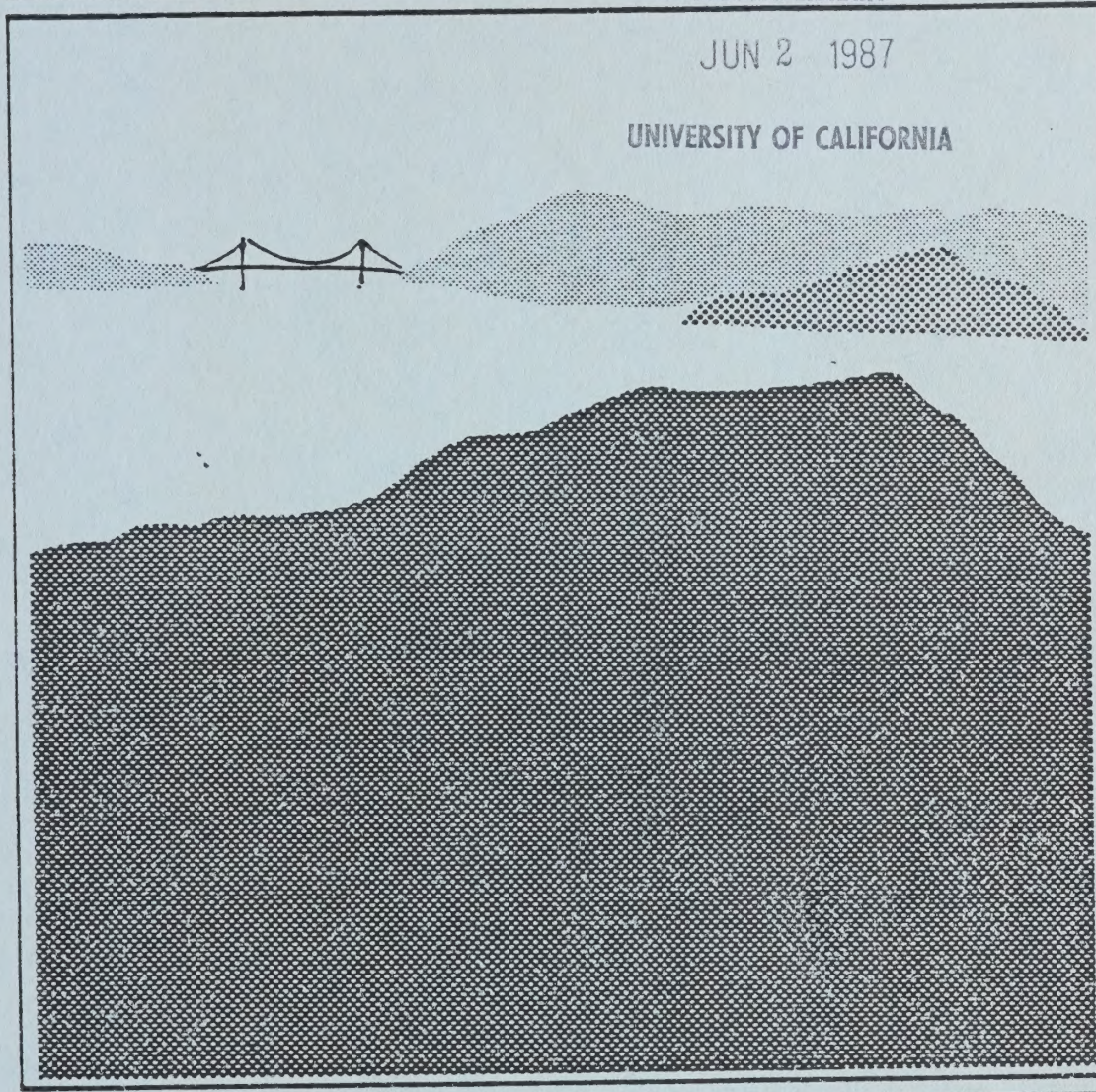


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GENERAL PLAN

ALBANY, CALIFORNIA

Including
ALBANY HILL AREA SPECIFIC PLAN



DUNCAN & JONES
Urban & Environmental Planning Consultants

GENERAL PLAN ALBANY, CALIFORNIA

PREPARED FOR THE
CITY OF ALBANY • GENERAL PLAN REVISION PROGRAM

JULY, 1975

APPROVED JUN 30 1975

REVISED March 31, 1980
1981
1982

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Albany General Plan Revision Program, begun in April 1973, was initiated in response to changes in the State mandates relating to the local planning process, to the need to provide a more current analysis of the City's physical constraints and opportunities, as well as the need to set forth the long-term goals and objectives of the City. State law now requires that local general plans contain a housing element, seismic safety element, noise element, scenic highway element, safety element, open space element and conservation element, as well as land use and circulation elements. In response to these requirements this plan has been divided into the following major subject areas: The Residential Environment, the Natural Environment, Circulation, the Commercial Environment, and the Planning Process.

A. NATURE OF THE ALBANY GENERAL PLAN

This General Plan identifies goals, defines City policies and establishes procedures enabling the local government to implement the defined policies in the plan period. It establishes a desired land use pattern within the community, which serves as a framework for future development and growth in the community. It outlines environmental constraints in Albany, and focuses not only on the type of development, but also on the quality of the development and the effect of new development and public actions upon the existing community.

The land use element and policies establish the long-term goals of the community, the desired mixture of uses and type of development over a long period of time, while the recommendations for implementation are intended to be carried out in the next one to five years. The Plan provides a basis not only for responding intelligently and effectively to proposals for new development but also for initiating programs to deal with and respond to the existing environment.

The General Plan Revision Program was carried out in two phases: an Open Space Element of the General Plan was initially completed in accordance with State requirements in May 1973, and was adopted by the City Council in December 1973.

The major portion of the revision program in which the other plan elements were addressed was carried out in the period from August 1973 through July 1975. The Citizens' Advisory Committee met with the Consultant to provide policy input into the planning process. Consultation with members of the City staff, regional agencies related to planning, local citizens, members of the Planning and Zoning Commission as well as the City Council all assisted the Consultant in evaluating community needs and priorities. The Discussion Draft of the Preliminary General Plan was submitted to the Citizens' Advisory Committee for initial review of Plan proposals. The CAC reviewed the draft and submitted comments and suggestions to the Consultant. This input was used as a basis for revising the draft and developing it as a Preliminary General Plan report for presentation to the Planning and Zoning Commission and the City Council for public hearing and final adoption. Technical information developed during the planning program is included in the Basic Data Report printed in December 1973, and the supplemental technical material available at the Albany city offices. The Consultants gratefully acknowledge the participation and assistance of the Citizens' Advisory Committee.

The text of this report is divided into five major sections incorporating those elements required by State law:

I. The Housing Environment: includes a summary of the analysis of the housing stock, recommends plans for the improvement of housing and standards for new development, and considers the means for providing adequate housing for all residents of Albany.

II. The Natural Environment: includes analyses and policies related to open space, conservation, seismic safety, and safety considerations. It includes the evaluation of existing public open space, the identification of unimproved land or water natural resource areas, scenic lands as well as wildlife habitats. The section on seismic considerations discusses the nature of seismic hazards in Albany, while the section on safety establishes policies for the protection of the community from fires and non-seismically related geologic hazards.

III. Circulation: includes the general location and extent of existing and proposed major thoroughfares, transportation routes, and terminals. It includes bicycle routes, scenic highways, and the noise element which shows present and projected noise levels associated with all existing and proposed major transportation elements.

IV. The Economic Environment: discusses the business environment in Albany, the treatment of existing commercial and industrial areas, and the constraints

and opportunities for new economic development.

V. The Planning Process: sets up a mechanism for implementing the policies and programs recommended in the various sections of the Plan.

B. EXISTING CHARACTER AND CONTEXT FOR PLANNING

The City of Albany, situated in the East Bay between Richmond, El Cerrito and Berkeley, encompasses a total area within its boundaries of 3,218 acres, of which 1,117 acres are land area, and 2,101 acres are submerged tideland and bay area. Settled and developed in the early twentieth century, the community is residential in character, with a predominance of single-family housing.

The approach taken in the General Plan Revision Program to analyzing the City was to identify the patterns of existing development in the City, those qualities of the community which appear desirable to retain, as well as examples of conflicts of use and under-utilization of land, and to define those areas of the City that warrant special types of public and private action. These analyses also identified environmental constraints and resources that either should be protected, preserved, or developed, or which would place constraints on new or existing development.

In the twenty year time frame on which this plan is based, changes in land use, intensity of use and the amount of public improvement in different areas of the City will have an incremental effect on the character of Albany, and can, unless planned for in an orderly fashion, have an undesirable impact on the community. Therefore, it is appropriate to determine a desirable pattern for the distribution of land uses and to establish the character of development for Albany in the future.

The General Plan pattern of land uses, its policies, and implementation mechanisms were developed to ensure that the distribution and location of land uses in Albany should constitute both a desirable and achievable pattern for the community. In some areas the constraints of the natural environment indicate limits to the potential for development. There are only a few areas of incompatible use in the City. As residential and commercial structures age in the City, public actions and initiative will be necessary to preserve or improve the desirable qualities in these areas. Efforts should be made to ensure that new development replaces obsolete buildings or uses. The quality of this new

4 development should be subjected to careful review, so as to enhance the attractiveness of the surrounding areas, and to prevent any further deterioration in the character of the residential environment that might be caused by congestion, lack of open space or incompatible building design or appearance. On San Pablo Avenue new development should be encouraged to increase the economic viability of the commercial area. Albany Waterfront Master Plan was adopted by the City Council on February 14, 1977, and now represents the adopted City policy for the development of the shoreline area. The Albany Hill Area Specific Plan was adopted by the City Council on January 23, 1978, and now represents the adopted City policy for the conservation and development of Albany Hill.

The concerns of the individual chapters of the General Plan--housing, natural environment, circulation, and economic environment--were combined to reflect an overall picture of future land use distribution in Albany. Recommendations under each section provide a framework within which changes can occur over time within the community. The Planning Process outlined in Chapter V indicates a means for monitoring the changes recommended in the Plan, and for implementing the recommendations for action in the Plan.

The General Plan is a policy document, adopted by the City Council, which states the goals and objectives of the community and outlines the means to be pursued for their achievement. It is expressed graphically by the General Plan map (Map 9), indicating land use areas and circulation patterns to be achieved by the end of the planning period. The General Plan map represents the desired pattern of land use, residential densities and major components of the circulation system toward which the community should move over a twenty-year time frame. The General Plan map indicates the predominant use of land in each area, and does not preclude minor deviations from the overall pattern. Therefore, it does not reflect every church, institution, commercial, single or multi-family residential use that may exist, nor should it be interpreted as recommending or requiring their removal. The General Plan does not automatically change the classification or the permitted use of land. This function is served by the Zoning Ordinance, which should be amended after adoption of the General Plan in accordance with the provisions and policies contained in the Plan. State law now requires that the Zoning Ordinance be in conformity with the policies expressed in the General Plan.

C. PLAN CONCEPT

The analysis conducted during the General Plan Revision Program indicates that Albany is a community in which the large majority of the City's land area is developed, with few vacant parcels offering the potential for new development. With very few exceptions, any development that occurs will result from a re-use of already developed parcels. The community is primarily residential in character, with single-family, one-story structures the dominant housing type. Multi-family structures are concentrated on Kains Street, Adams Street, Solano Avenue and north of Brighton Street. Commercial uses are located on Solano Avenue where professional offices and neighborhood commercial uses are located, and on San Pablo Avenue, where highway-oriented commercial uses are concentrated. The City was settled after the San Francisco earthquake, and over 50 percent of the housing stock was built prior to 1939.

Census information indicates that in the past several decades the predominant population make-up has changed from young families with children, to older couples who have remained in the community after their children have left home. The total population of the City (excluding the University Village student housing) has decreased, as the population per household has decreased. The population is an older, mature one in which one out of four persons is over the age of 65. As the older population give up their homes, they are replaced by younger families with children, by childless couples, and by single young persons. The decline in home ownership and increased renter occupancy of older units, as well as the high population of renter-occupied single-family structures can lead to a difficult housing maintenance situation.

The housing stock in Albany, relatively modest single-family homes, has been and will continue to be a source of moderate-cost owner- and renter-occupied housing. Residents of Albany appreciate the small-town atmosphere of the community, a characteristic missing from many of the adjacent urbanized portions of the Bay Area. The community has no identifiable poverty areas; however the proportion of elderly persons over age 65 classified as having incomes below the defined poverty level is twice the City average, and two out of every five persons classified as poor in the City are over the age of 65. Student housing in University Village forms a sub-community within the City, located west of San Pablo Avenue, south of Buchanan Street. It is owned and operated by the University of California and provides relatively low rent housing for married

university students.

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New apartment construction frequently is unattractive with cars parked on sidewalks, and designed in a fashion that does not complement the existing housing. The small size of lots encourages piecemeal development of buildings, separated by the minimum required yards, allowing no flexibility in design due to size constraints. In certain areas the requirements of commercial districts for parking, expansion, and storage conflict with the requirements of adjacent residential areas.

The current configuration of San Pablo Avenue is inadequate to handle traffic safety, and does little to reinforce the highway-oriented commercial character of the street.

There are certain environmental constraints that warrant special attention in the community, including the seismic-geologic hazard susceptibility areas identified in the Plan, the importance of Albany Hill as a visual landmark within the City, and of San Francisco Bay and the creek areas which border the City.

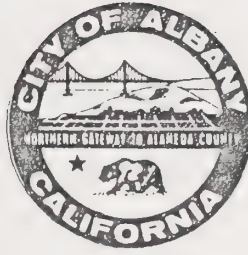
The Albany General Plan is based upon the following assumptions:

1. Albany will retain its character as a residential community. The population increase anticipated in Albany during the planning period is comprised mainly of persons who will occupy the Gateview Project at the western base of Albany Hill, as well as development on presently vacant land on the east side of the Hill. *yes,*
2. Commercial development will continue to be located on Solano Avenue and on San Pablo Avenue. *+ JkO*
3. Golden Gate Fields will continue to operate during the planning period as a commercial recreational use.
4. The University of California will continue to own and manage the Gill Tract. *yes*
5. There will be no major change in the configuration of I-80 and Route 17 during the planning period. *no*

The actions recommended in the Plan seek to preserve those land use characteristics of the community that have been identified as desirable and to ensure that any new development is compatible with and improves the existing uses, and removes undesirable development. The Plan recommends a housing maintenance program to conserve the existing housing stock, and the establishment of a housing data base and information system. In order to ensure that new development complements existing development and improves the residential environment, a design review process is recommended, as well as specific amendments to the Zoning Ordinance and incentives to promote desirable development.

High density residential development is recommended on Solano Avenue and north of Brighton Avenue, both of which are areas with access to commercial facilities, major traffic links, and rapid transit, as well as areas with a potential for conversion to such use. The General Plan recommends reinforcing the highway-oriented commercial character of San Pablo Avenue, improving the vehicular flow and traffic safety of the street, and enhancing the appearance of the street. On Solano Avenue higher density residential development is recommended although commercial uses would be required at street level. No major circulation changes are recommended in the Plan.

It is impossible to list every variation that might have been considered in developing the General Plan. However, two alternatives to this Plan were considered. One was a no-growth plan that would prohibit any new development. This alternative was rejected, since in certain areas new development was seen as desirable as a means of replacing older, obsolete structures, of providing a variety of housing not now available to the community, as well as of improving the commercial vitality of the City and replacing under-utilized commercial properties. The second alternative of uncontrolled growth was also rejected. Such a scenario would be limited in fact by the existing developed character of the City, the limited availability of vacant land, the cost of redeveloping existing developed areas, the difficulties of assembling large parcels of land without some type of public action involving condemnation, and the doubtful existence of demand or justification for such a policy.



HOUSING ELEMENT

OF THE

GENERAL PLAN

CITY OF ALBANY

Adopted January 7, 1985

City Council Resolution 85-03

The Housing Element was prepared by the Public Works Department planning division for review by the Planning & Zoning Commission and adoption by the City Council. Community input was received at several public meetings on housing problems, held in 1981 through 1983, before preparation of the draft, and at public hearings on the draft itself, held by the Planning & Zoning Commission and City Council in 1984.

The Housing Element follows this format:

- I. EXISTING HOUSING CONDITIONS AND NEEDS
 - A. Housing Needs - Population and Employment
 - B. Housing Needs - Income, Overcrowding, and Housing Stock
 - C. Residential Sites Inventory
- II. CONSTRAINTS ON SOLUTIONS TO HOUSING NEEDS
 - A. Non-governmental
 - B. Governmental
- III. ALBANY'S HOUSING GOALS, POLICIES
and Housing Program

Appendix: Review of 1975 Housing Element

I. EXISTING HOUSING CONDITIONS AND NEEDS

I. A. Housing Needs - Population and Employment

The statistical information at the end of this section shows that Albany's total population has remained fairly steady since 1960, while the number of housing units has increased substantially. This has resulted from two linked trends: an aging population, and a decline in the average household size (the number of people living together as a household). The proportion of total population made up of families (one or two parents plus children) has shrunk in comparison to the number of non-family households (young singles and couples without children, older singles, and couples with grown children, elderly singles and couples).

These two trends have affected the entire region, but Albany, as an older suburb, has been more affected than more recently developed areas. This is demonstrated by Albany's senior population which is substantially larger than other cities in Alameda County.

The trend of smaller household size is projected to continue, although at a reduced rate. In recent years, as older Albany residents have left their homes, the homes have generally been sold to young couples. This may mean that the number of families with children will increase in the future, but probably not enough to reverse the overall trend.

The Association of Bay Area Governments has established Albany's share of the 1990 regional housing need as 692 units (net addition to the housing stock). This number is based on ABAG projections of population and employment growth in Albany and in the region. These projections are made from

computer models which take into account such factors as housing demand, employment opportunities, the availability of suitable sites, and public services, commuting patterns, and housing type. ABAG forecasts that Albany's population will continue to grow slightly, but that household size will continue to shrink. As a result, ABAG projects the number of households to grow at a faster rate than the population. However, since ABAG computer modeling is not necessarily sensitive to trends in small areas, the opponent trend back to family households in Albany does not show up.

What do these trends mean in terms of housing needs? First, there is a need for more housing units to accommodate future population growth and the increased number of households. Second, there is a need for smaller units, as well as a need for housing suitable for seniors in Albany. Most recent construction of new housing units has been multiple-residential, with primarily two bedroom units.

Albany is primarily a bedroom community. In 1980, only 10 percent of Albany's employed residents actually worked in Albany. This compares to 37 percent for all of Alameda County. This situation is not likely to change: in 1980, Albany provided less than 1 percent of the jobs in Alameda County, and ABAG projects a slight decline in this percentage for 1990.

Population and Employment Statistical Tables

1. <u>Population</u>	<u>1960</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>% Change</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>% Change</u>	<u>1990²</u>	<u>% Change</u>
Albany	14,804	15,561	+5%	15,130	-3%	15,770	+4%
N.W. ¹ Alameda County	571,278	577,517	+1%	535,559	-7%	557,400	+4%
Other Alameda County	336,931	495,667	+47%	569,820	+15%	656,700	+15%
2. <u>Households</u>							
Albany	5,254	5,798	+10%	6,855	+18%	7,464	+ 9%
N.W. Alameda County	-	-	-	225,633	-	234,740	+ 4%
Other Alameda County	-	-	-	200,459	-	228,070	+14%

¹N.W. Alameda County is made up of the cities of Albany, Berkeley, Emeryville, Alameda, Oakland, and Piedmont

²1990 figures are based on 1990 ABAG projections

3.	<u>Household Size</u>	<u>1960</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1990</u>
	Albany	2.81	2.48	2.18	2.07
	Alameda County	n.a.	2.84	2.53	2.56

		<u>A l b a n y</u>							
4.	<u>Population by Age Groups</u>	<u>1960</u>	<u>% Total</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>% Total</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>% Total</u>	<u>Alameda County</u> <u>(1980) % Total</u>	
	19 and under	4,477	30	3,850	26	3,286	22	30	
	20 - 34	3,026	20	3,873	26	5,079	34	29	
	35 - 64	5,680	39	4,913	34	4,408	29	32	
	65+	1,622	11	2,038	14	2,357	16	10	

		<u>1 9 7 0</u>				<u>1 9 8 0</u>			
5.	<u>Population by Racial Categories</u>	<u>Albany</u>	<u>% Total</u>	<u>Alameda Co.</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Albany</u>	<u>% Total</u>	<u>Alameda County</u> <u>% Total</u>	
	White	13,094	89	80		11,413	75	67	
	Black	531	4	15		871	6	18	
	Amer.Indian	72	-	-		81	1	1	
	Asian	819	6	5		1,884	12	8	
	Other	158	1	-		881	6	9	
	Hispanic ¹	*		*		1,320	9 ²	12	

¹1970 category not comparable to 1980 ²Hispanics are doublecounted

6.	<u>Employment</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>% of Alameda Co.</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>% Change</u>	<u>% Alameda Co.</u>
	Jobs in Albany	3,962	0.78	4,200	+ 6	0.73
	Jobs in Alameda County	511,106		577,400	+13	

I. B. Housing Needs - Income, Overcrowding, Housing Stock and Special Needs

1. Income

Albany has a slightly lower median income than Alameda County, although the gap decreased considerably between 1970 and 1980. In addition, 50 percent of Albany's households are low-income* compared to 44 percent for Alameda County. Albany's higher proportion of low-income households is due primarily to two factors: Albany's large senior population, and University Village - married student housing for the University of California.

a. Seniors

Albany has 16 percent of its population 65 years old and over, compared to 10 percent for Alameda County. Seniors generally have lower incomes than the rest of the population, since they are usually retired and no longer employed. However, this high proportion of seniors will probably begin to decline in the next ten years, since a senior vacating a home is usually not replaced by another senior but rather by a young professional couple who can afford the cost of purchasing a home at current prices.

The overall income figures also conceal an anomaly produced by a high proportion of senior homeowners. These seniors have low incomes in comparison to the rest of the

*Low income, as defined by the State, is 80 percent of the Bay Area median or below. Very low income is 50 percent of the median or below. The Federal government classifies these categories as moderate and low income, respectively.

population. However, many senior homeowners have also paid off their mortgages, or have low monthly payments, because the house was purchased long before home values and mortgage interest rates rose so steeply in the 1970s. As a result, their homes are affordable to them while new housing is not affordable even to a relatively high-income family.

There is another side to the housing situation for senior homeowners: if they want to move, they probably cannot afford to, because of the higher costs of current mortgage rates, plus the increased property taxes which are assessed on a change of ownership.

b. Students

About 17 percent of Albany's population is made up of University of California married students living in University Village. Students probably account for a higher total proportion of the population, given Albany's proximity to Berkeley, but they are not counted separately in other areas of the City. Students are somewhat analogous to seniors in terms of the housing market. First, statistically they are lower income. However, this is a voluntary and temporary situation. Second, the residents of University Village are not part of the general housing market: the housing is provided by the University specifically for students.

c. Regional Need for Low-Income Housing

State law requires that the regional housing need as determined by ABAG be allocated in such a way as to "avoid further impaction of localities with relatively high proportions of lower-income households." ABAG's allocation method does this

by averaging the existing income range of a city's households with the same figures for the county and the region. Those cities with above-average numbers of lower-income households (such as Albany) are allocated a slightly smaller percentage of new lower-income units; cities with more affluent populations receive higher numbers of new lower-income units.

In Albany's case, the existing percentages of very low and low-income households are 30 percent and 20 percent. The new units are allocated based on 27 percent and 18 percent (231 and 154 units, respectively).

It should be noted that these income projections are based on the assumption that the income distribution of the Bay Area will be the same ten years from now in 1990 as it was in 1980. On a regional basis this may be a valid assumption. However, as discussed above, Albany's senior population will likely decline in the next ten years, so that our proportion of low-income households will also decline. Also, the number of low-income student households in University Village is not likely to increase, as the student population at U.C. Berkeley has been stable for many years and will probably remain so in the future.

d. Housing Costs

Albany has 35 percent of its renters paying over 35 percent of their income in rent, compared to 33 percent for Alameda County. (University Village is excluded from these figures.) For owner-occupied houses, Albany has only

for mortgage payments, 8 percent paying more than 35 percent of their income while Alameda has 13 percent. In the past, the general rule of housing costs was that no one should have to pay more than 25 percent of his or her income for housing. This percentage rose to 30 percent for renters and 35 percent for new buyers in the late 1970s.

The cost of housing must be discussed from two very different perspectives -- renters and owners. Both housing markets are influenced by supply and demand, interest rates, etc., but the effects are different because of the different nature of each market.

Most renters are in the housing market at all times. The exceptions are renters with a lease who are out of the market for the term of the lease, renters in public or quasi-public housing (such as University Village) whose landlords are not influenced by a profit motive, and renters in rent-controlled housing (none of which exists in Albany). However, renters in the first two categories are out of the market only temporarily -- leases expire, and most students eventually leave school.

Thus, a change in the rental market quickly affects all renters. Rent levels can be driven up by more rental households competing for a relatively fixed number of rental units. This has been the case nationally, regionally, and in Albany -- the number of renter households has continued to increase, while the construction of new rental units virtually ceased in the late 1970s. This change in the market affects all renters equally.

Long-term tenants may have

their rents raised less than the rents for new or vacated units, but in general all rents go up.

Conventional wisdom holds that a vacancy rate of 5 percent in housing will keep the supply-demand situation normal, so that rents are not driven up by this one factor. Unfortunately, even the region's vacancy rate has not been at the 5 percent level in the last ten years. In 1970, Alameda County had a vacancy rate of 3.9 percent, while Albany's was 2.0 per cent (and only 2.4 percent in 1960).

Normally, the answer to a low vacancy rate is to build more housing units. However, between 1960 and 1970, Albany increased its housing stock by 10 percent, and between 1970 and 1980, Albany further increased its housing stock by 18 percent, a dramatic increase. Yet the growth in the number of households paralleled (or slightly exceeded) the number of new housing units, so that the vacancy rate actually declined to 1.6 percent in 1980. Clearly, external regional and national factors have prevented the Albany housing market from attaining a conventional "normal" state.

It should be noted that vacancy rates are generally calculated for the housing market as a whole. This leads to significant distortions in terms of the owner portion of the housing market, which are related to the different nature of the owner market.

One essential difference between the renter and owner markets is that an owner is generally out of the housing market until he or she wants to move. In the 1960s, national figures

showed that the average family moved every five years. This was probably a statistical fiction -- the many homeowners who stayed in one location for 20 years or more were outweighed by the relatively few families subject to corporate or military transfer who moved every two or three years. Recent national statistics show that the average family moves every six years.

The ownership housing market is made up of owners wanting to move, plus renters buying their first house. At any given time, this is a very small number compared to the total number of owners.

Probably 5 percent of ownership units should be for sale in order to have a "normal" market. However, this number does not equate to the number of vacant units. Most owner units for sale are occupied until they are sold, since the owner usually has to sell before he or she can buy a new home. The major exception would be newly built units which are vacant until they are sold.

The issue of affordability for owner-occupied units, then, is two-pronged. First is the issue of owners not wanting to sell or buy. These owners are fortunate, because they are not really in the housing market, and their housing costs are essentially frozen: their mortgage payments are fixed, and their property taxes can only increase 2 percent a year under Proposition 13. In Albany's case these people are even more fortunate, because many of them have owned their homes for many years, so that their mortgage payments are very low.

The other part of the ownership housing situation, and the part which gets the most attention, is that of the ownership housing market. Here affordability is determined by purchase price and by mortgage interest rates. The problem in Albany, as elsewhere in the Bay Area, is that the purchase price of homes has soared, accompanied by an equivalent rise in interest rates. Where a typical Albany house might have sold for \$25,000 in 1970, the same house would have sold for \$115,000 in 1980 and 1984. Likewise, mortgage interest rates of 7 to 8% were the norm in 1970; in 1980 and 1984, 12 to 14% was the best that a purchaser could do. The obvious problem with these costs is demonstrated graphically in that a family with an income at the high end of the moderate category (120% of median) could only afford a \$60,000 house assuming 14% interest and a 10% down payment. Only the very cheapest, one-bedroom condominium conversions in the East Bay even approach that price.

2. Overcrowding

Albany has 6.9 percent of its households in overcrowded quarters, compared to 4.7 percent for Alameda County. (Overcrowding is defined as more than one person per room.) Overcrowding in Albany occurs slightly more frequently in ownership units than in rental units.

3. Housing Stock

Albany's single-family homes, excluding those on Albany Hill, were primarily built during the 1920s. Typically,

these houses were one-story stucco over frame construction on 37.5' x 100' lots. These houses are in good condition if they have been maintained over the years. Standards of maintenance in the City vary from the highest in the northeast corner to lower in the areas along Kains and Adams. However, even in these latter areas there are very few actually dilapidated houses. In the late 1960's and early 1970's, single family houses in multiple residential zones were frequently acquired by developers and then demolished for new multiple residential buildings. Maintenance on the older houses often suffered in anticipation of sales for similar development. However, with the rising prices of single-family homes (and other constraints on multiple residential construction) this is no longer the case. Generally, houses needing rehabilitation in Albany need roof work, termite damage repair and/or electrical/plumbing updating.

Multiple residential rental construction was concentrated in the 1950-1975 period, although there are apartment buildings dating back to the 1920's. There are only two apartment buildings that could be described as run-down, but neither is actually dilapidated. Condominium construction began in the mid-70's. These units are generally in very good condition.

4. Special Needs (large families, handicapped, female-headed households)

Of Albany's 6855 occupied housing units, 427 are families of five or more persons. Generally these families need three or four bedroom housing units which are the exception in Albany.

Albany has 698 persons with a work disability, and 440 persons (295 elderly) with a public transit disability. There are no "accessible-to-the-handicapped" projects in Albany.

Albany has 691 female-headed households. If they have special needs for housing, it is not because they are female-headed, but because they are lower-income or elderly.

Income and Housing Stock - Statistical Tables

1. <u>Median Household Income</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>% Change</u>
Albany	8,153	16,408	+ 101
Alameda County	11,133	18,200	+ 68

2. <u>Low-Income Households</u>	<u>% Low*</u>
Albany Census Tract 4201 (east of BART, north of Solano)	36
4202 (west of BART, north of Solano, east of San Pablo)	53
4203 (west of San Pablo, north of Solano)	41
4204 (University Village)	78
4205 (east of San Pablo, south of Solano, west of BART)	57
4206 (east of BART, south of Solano)	36

*As defined by State - 80 percent of median income. Equals Low and Moderate in Federal terms.

3. <u>Housing Units</u> 1980	<u>Albany</u>	<u>% Total</u>	<u>Alameda Co. % Total</u>
Total	7035		
Owner-occupied	3365	47.8	51
Rental	3490	49.6	45
Vacant For Sale	34	0.5	3
Vacant For Rent	76	1.1 1.6	2
Vacant, Not on market	70	1.0	

4. <u>Household Monthly Rent Levels</u> 1980	<u>Albany</u>	<u>% of Total</u>	<u>Alameda Co. % Total</u>
\$0 - 199	1163	34	27
\$200-399	1681	49	59
\$400+	589	17	14

5. Households by Income and % of Income Paid for Rent

<u>% Income</u>		<u>%</u>	<u>\$5,000-9,999</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>\$10-19,999</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>\$20,000+</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%</u>
0-24	-	-	241	32	799	63	705	86	1745	52
25-34	40	8	150	20	267	21	0	-	572	17
35+	417	79	364	48	181	14	0	-	962	29
Not Reported	<u>69</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>86</u>	<u>2</u>
TOTAL	526		755		1264		820		3365	
% TOTAL		16		22		38		24		

6. Households by Income and % of Income Paid for Rent

<u>% Income</u>	<u>\$0-4999</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>\$5,000-9,999</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>\$10-19,999</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>\$20,000+</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Alameda Co.</u> <u>% Total</u>
0-24	-		11	3	538	54	482	81	1031	44	49
25-34	-	-	56	14	267	27	115	19	438	19	18
35+	294	88	339	83	181	18	-	-	814	35	33
Not Reported	<u>41</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>58</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>-</u>
TOTAL	335		406		1003		597		2341		
% TOTAL		14		17		43		26			

7. Households by Income and % of Income paid for Housing

<u>% Income</u>	<u>\$0-4999</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>\$5000-9999</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>\$10,000-20,000</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>\$2000+</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Alameda Co.</u>	<u>%</u>
0-24	81	31	340	83	513	84	1258	90	2192	82	139,540	74
25-34	52	20	36	9	48	8	102	7	237	9	24,628	13
35+	99	38	34	8	49	8	40	3	222	8	24,688	13
Not rept.	<u>28</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
TOTAL	260		410		610		1400		2651		188,856	
% TOTAL		10		15		23		53				

8. Vacancy Rates and Housing Supply

<u>Albany</u>	<u>1960</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>% Change</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>% Change</u>
Households	5254	5798	+ 10	6855	+ 18
Avail. Housing Units	5384	5918	+ 10	6965	+ 18
Avail. Vacant Units	130	120		110	
Vacancy Rate	2.4%	2.0%		1.6%	

Alameda County

Vacancy Rate	n.a.	3.9%		4.1%	
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9. Home Value/Income

<u>Albany</u>	<u>1970</u> \$	<u>1980</u> \$	<u>% Change</u>
Median Value of Owner-Occupied Home	22,100	85,500	+ 287
Median Income of Homeowners	10,206	22,811	+ 123
Ratio	2.2 to 1	3.7 to 1	

Alameda County

Median Value of Owner-Occupied Home	23,664	85,300	+ 261
Median Income of HOMEowners	11,133	18,700	+ 68
Ratio	2.1 to 1	4.6 to 1	

10. Housing Units Since 1980 (Albany)

<u>Construction</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1981</u>	<u>1982</u>	<u>1983</u>	<u>Total</u>
Single Family	7	7	2	3	19
Condominiums	11	4	103	-	118
Rental Apartments	-	-	-	-	-
<u>Demolition or Conversion</u>	-	3	3	1	7
<u>Net Change</u>	+ 18	+ 8	+102	+ 2	+ 130

11. Age of Housing Units by Type (Albany)

<u>Year Built</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>% of Total</u>	<u>Total Occupied</u>	<u>Vacant</u>	<u>Owner Occupied</u>	<u>Renter Occupied</u>
Since 1980	130	2	26	104	26	-
1975-80	504	7	464	40	239	218
1970-1979	335	5	333	2	94	239
1960-1969	924	13	910	85	824	14
1940-1959	2233	31	2177	51	794	1388
1939 or earlier	3039	42	2966	73	2152	814

12. Housing Unit Size (Albany) (1980)

<u>Bedrooms</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>% of Total</u>	<u>Owner Occupied</u>	<u>Renter Occupied</u>
Studio	133	2	13	120
1	1766	25	340	1353
2	3495	50	1697	1719
3	1358	19	1054	275
4+	283	4	261	22

13. Overcrowding (1980)

<u>Units with More Than one Person Per Room</u>			
	<u>Albany</u>	<u>% Total</u>	<u>Alameda Co. % Total Housing</u>
Total	474	6.9	4.7
Owner Occupied	264	3.8	1.7
Renter Occupied	210	3.1	3.0

14. Female Householder (No Husband) (1980)

	<u>Albany</u>		<u>University Village</u>		<u>Alameda County</u>	
	<u>Non-Poverty</u>	<u>Poverty</u>	<u>Non-Poverty</u>	<u>Poverty</u>	<u>Non-Poverty</u>	<u>Poverty</u>
With children	378	103	48	44	23,751	12,602
Without children	188	22	-	-	12,385	1,206

15.

15. Householders 65 and Older (1980)

	<u>Albany</u>	<u>% of Total Households</u>	<u>Alameda Co. % of Total Households</u>
Renter	489	7	6
Owner	1152	17	11

16. Households by Income Level, 1980

	<u>Very Low</u> (Less than \$10,304)		<u>Low</u> (\$10,305- \$16,486)		<u>Moderate</u> (\$16,487- \$24,728)		<u>Above Moderate</u> (\$24,729 +)	
Albany (excluding University Village)	1560	26%	1173	20%	1455	24%	1791	30%
Alameda County (% only)		28%		17%		20%		35%

17. Year Homeowner Bought House

	<u>Alameda County</u>	<u>Albany</u>
Pre - 1950	17380 8%	624 19%
1950-1959	30611 13%	614 18%
1960-1969	51370 23%	598 18%
1970-1974	41080 18%	508 15%
1975-1978	57933 26%	736 22%
1979-1980	27763 12%	285 8%

Total: 226137

Total: 3365

19. Low Income Households Paying
Over 25% of Income for Housing

Renter	1262
Owner	284

18. Regional Housing Needs 1980 - 1990 (Source: ABAG)

<u>Very Low</u>	<u>Low</u>	<u>Moderate</u>	<u>Above Moderate</u>	<u>Total</u>
187 (27%)	125 (18%)	145 (21%)	235 (34%)	692 Housing Units

I. C. Residential Sites Inventory

Albany is a primarily-developed city. Except for a few large vacant parcels on and near Albany Hill, the only other sites would be infill or redevelopment (to higher density or to another use). Following is a discussion of these sites, including discussion of each site's zoning and suitability for residential use.

1. Albany Hill Area

- a. IGC site. Northwest corner of hill area, 15 acres; approved for 400 units in 1981; use permit expires in 1985. 27 units complete, 76 units under construction. Primarily two-bedroom condominiums; current price range \$130,000 to \$150,000. This site is zoned R-4 (Residential Towers - 87 units per acre) and once had a use permit for up to 2,500 units in highrise buildings with parking structures. Only the first phase of 482 units was completed, in 1975. Grading began in 1977 for a second phase, but financing was not obtained and building construction did not proceed. A plan for federally-subsidized senior housing on part of the site was turned down by HUD because the site is too far from shopping, transit and medical facilities.

The 2,500-unit use permit was valid through 1982, but in 1980 the developers went into voluntary reorganization/bankruptcy with regard to the loans on the vacant land. The developers then approached the City with a modified use permit proposal for up to 400 low/midrise condominium units, which was approved. According to the developer, financing for highrise residential on that site is not obtainable.

- b. 11 acres south of highrise, west of Hill. Zoned for 12 units per acre. No pending or approved development proposal. Maximum number of units - 121.
- c. Hedgpeth site. Northeast corner of hill, 4 acres; approved for 47 condominium units in 1979; use permit expired in 1984. The developer was unable to secure financing for the project.
- d. Lands End site; south of Hedgpeth, east side of Hill. Use permit approved in 1983 for 19 units on 1.2 acres. Permit expires 1985. Building permits for phase one (5 units) were issued in fall of 1984.
- e. Sites at north end of Madison Street (unbuilt portion): Above Madison: 0.8 acres, zoned for 18 units per acre; Below Madison: 0.5 acres, zoned for 18 units per acre. Total maximum number of units: 23. There have been use permits approved for these sites in the past (1976-80), but financing was not obtained.

2. Infill

- a. Scattered vacant lots: There are approximately 25 existing vacant single-family lots in Albany. Most are located on Albany Hill, where foundations must be engineered because of steep slopes. There are no other constraints to development of these lots.
- b. Redivision of merged lots: A 1981 Zoning Ordinance amendment allows two small (i.e., 25' x 100') lots to be unmerged if one is vacant and there are a substantial number of similar size lots nearby. Staff estimates that about 30 new vacant lots could be created under this process. Most of these would be located in the flat areas of Albany, and would be readily buildable.

3. Private Redevelopment to Higher Density

Much of Albany is built up with single-family houses, and is zoned single-family. The areas zoned for higher density are the R-3 areas on Kains and Adams and north of Brighton, plus the R-2 areas between Buchanan and Solano. There is one currently-valid use permit on Kains for a 30-unit apartment building on former single-family lots. The permit was approved in 1979 and expires in 1985. No other applications for this kind of redevelopment have been filed since 1978.

There are two major obstacles to potential redevelopment in these areas. First, many of the lots are small (2,500 to 3,750 square feet) and in separate ownership. The Zoning Ordinance requires a minimum lot size of 5,000 square feet for multiple development. This means that a potential developer must acquire two or three contiguous lots in order to take advantage of the higher density. This is more difficult now than in the 1960's and early 1970's, before single-family house values soared. Then, a developer could buy one older house at a reasonable price and rent it at a profit while waiting to acquire one of its neighbors. Now, house prices, and the cost of financing, are so high that an owner cannot make a profit on renting. This makes land assembly very difficult, if not impossible.

The second major obstacle is Albany's voter-imposed off-street requirement of two spaces per unit, which applies to both single family and multiple units. This makes it nearly impossible to reach the maximum density allowed under the zoning. For example, an R-3 zoning allows up to five units on a 5,000-square-foot lot. But no more than eight parking spaces can be fitted onto that size lot, limiting the units to four. Parking is less of a problem with a larger lot, but as noted above, assembling a larger lot is quite difficult.

An additional problem exists with the C-E (Commercial Expansion) zones on the west side of Kains and the east side of Adams. This zoning was intended to allow for expansion of commercial uses on San Pablo Avenue, and has been used for that purpose. The zoning also allows R-3 multiple residential development, and professional offices by use permit. In recent years, there has been only one multiple-residential project proposed and approved (four condominium units), but it has not been built because of financial problems. There has been interest in conversion of residential units to professional offices, but only one has actually occurred since 1978.

4. Commercial Areas

- a. Solano Avenue: Solano has a large number of existing residential units. Most older units are located on the second story, over ground floor commercial, or are located in portions of the commercial zone which extend down side streets. These units were primarily built before 1950, usually with no off-street parking. These units are well-suited to residential use by small-size households without cars, as they are located close to public transit, shopping, and other services. A drawback for elderly tenants is the stairclimbing needed for access. Unfortunately, these units are being converted at a slow but sure rate (1-3 units per year recently) to commercial uses, such as office space.

There are also many apartment buildings on Solano, constructed pre-1960 and in the 1960's. These buildings generally have their own off-street parking. In the late 1960's, commercial uses on Solano were hard hit by competition from the new El Cerrito Plaza Shopping Center. Several large 3-4 story residential apartment buildings were erected during this time. Subsequently, Solano was beautified and specialty commercial uses began filling in the vacant retail shops. The City adopted a policy in its 1975 General Plan that Solano should become a pedestrian-oriented street, with commercial uses, not residential, allowed on the ground floor. As yet, none of these larger apartment buildings has been converted to commercial uses. There are approximately 348 residential units located on the commercial portion of Solano Avenue: 261 in apartment buildings, 87 over with commercial uses, or on side streets.

There is one vacant lot on Solano, plus two lots improved only with small houses. As noted above, residential uses are allowed above the ground floor. However, given the high land value, developers do not propose residential uses because their return is less than that for commercial uses.

- b. San Pablo Avenue: The zoning on San Pablo allows residential above the ground floor. However, there is very little residential use on San Pablo Avenue (33 units not including University Village). This is probably because the street is much noisier and more heavily traveled than Solano and because many of the commercial uses are auto-oriented and therefore noisier and less attractive. There are two sites which are sufficiently large to allow residential development, possibly in conjunction with commercial: the Albany Bowl, and University Village/Gill Tract.

1. Albany Bowl: The bowling alley itself is a large building with ample parking. The former owners bought several parcels to the north, assembling a total ownership of about three acres, with the hope of developing a small shopping center there. The site was sold in 1982, and maybe for sale again. Most of the site is underutilized, with large areas of parking.
2. U.C. Properties: The University of California owns two large properties in Albany. The first is University Village, which contains the University's married students housing. The Village fronts on San Pablo Avenue, runs back to the railroad tracks, and contains 920 housing units on approximately 65 acres. Some of the housing dates from World War II when the site was military housing. Many of the units were rebuilt in the 1960's. Portions of the site, including the San Pablo Avenue frontage, could be developed to higher densities. The southwest portion of the site is zoned M (Industrial) and is primarily vacant.

The second U.S. property is the Gill Tract, which is largely vacant and used for agricultural experiments. This site of one acre fronts on San Pablo, Buchanan, and Jackson, and could be developed residentially, possibly in conjunction with commercial use on the San Pablo frontage.

Although both of these San Pablo Avenue sites could be used for residential, the City would favor mixed-use with commercial in addition to residential, for several reasons. First, non-residential

development on the San Pablo frontage would buffer the residential units from the adverse impacts of the street. Second, parking spaces could be shared, since many commercial uses have their highest parking demand in the daytime, while residential parking demand is highest at night.

Third, the City must keep healthy commercial areas for financial reasons (tax revenues). Exclusively, residential developments in commercial areas not only produce less tax revenue, but tend to interrupt the continuity of the commercial area. Over time, this can lead to the deterioration of the commercial area, since the remaining businesses have less drawing power on their own. This is why the City changed the zoning on Solano Avenue to not allow residential on the ground floor.

5. Industrial Areas

There are virtually no vacant parcels in Albany's limited Industrial areas along Cleveland Avenue and Eastshore Highway. There are a few underused parcels: older manufacturing uses that have gone out of business or which may go out of business in the future. The trend in recent years has been to service uses in this area: auto repair, auto salvage and equipment rental yards. Aside from the City's desire to keep what little industry it has (for tax revenue purposes), residential use of these areas would not be appropriate. Even if all the industrial uses were relocated, the land in question is made up of two narrow strips sandwiched between the Interstate 80 freeway and the Southern Pacific railroad tracks - both producers of noise and other pollution that combine to make an environment entirely uncondusive to residential use. The sites are also located at some distance from schools and shopping.

6. Waterfront

The largest land use on the waterfront is the Golden Gate Fields Racetrack. The lease runs through 1997. The underlying property owner is the Santa Fe Land Improvement Company, which also owns some vacant land north of the racetrack currently used only for overflow parking. Adjacent to this parcel is the City-owned landfill area.

There are several factors which inhibit significant residential development at the waterfront. First, the racetrack is a major source of tax revenue for the City. There are no current plans to close or relocate the racetrack. If there were, the City would be interested in a replacement land use that would generate an equivalent amount of tax revenue. Residential development generally does not.

Second, all of the immediate shoreline area is subject to the jurisdiction of the Bay Conservation and Development Commission, which can only allow water-oriented or water-dependent uses (not including residential).

The City's adopted waterfront plan calls for a public marina, related commercial uses, and a large public park on City property. This property is limited to marine uses by the original State Tidelands Grant. The site is zoned for Commercial Recreation, so rezoning would be required for any residential proposal. However, some residential development could be accommodated at this site. The City is currently studying what future uses might be desirable if the racetrack is closed, or reconfigured to allow development on currently under-used lands.

7. Other Areas

1. Hill Lumber Company: This is a nonconforming use on a level, easily buildable site of approximately four acres, which is bordered on three sides by residential uses. It is already zoned R-3, so there is a potential for 220 residential units if the lumberyard ever ceases operating.
2. School sites: Unlike many other districts, Albany schools are at full capacity, so no school closures are foreseen in the near future. The School District has informally considered selling or redeveloping the McGregor School site for residential or office use. The 0.8 acre site is adjacent to R-1 zoning on the east and south, and across the street from R-3 zoning on the west and north. R-1 zoning would allow nine units, R-2 zoning would allow 27 units, and R-3 zoning would allow 44 units. The site is currently used for a continuation high school and district offices.
3. USDA Building: This is a large research/office building operated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The building is four stories, with a large parking lot. If the federal government were to sell it, it could be converted to residential use. However, a more likely use would be a research and development office use, given the monolithic design of the building and its location at the edge of an industrial area, near the freeway. The Federal government has no current plans to sell the building.

8. Housing Types

State law requires that the housing element identify adequate sites for rental housing, factory-built (modular) housing, and mobilehomes. Albany makes no distinction between rental or owner housing in any of its residential zones. No new rental housing has been built in Albany since the mid-70's due to a lack of financing. However, even though new proposed developments have been approved as condominiums, over time many condominium developments become a combination of owner-occupied and rental units.

Albany also has no restrictions against factory-built housing or mobilehomes. This may change in the future, as financing is apparently becoming more available for construction of rental housing. Mobilehomes are permitted in single-family zones only in Albany, and could conceivably be used on unmerged 25' x 100' lots created as described earlier. However, this is not likely, given the high value of land in Albany.

II. CONSTRAINTS ON SOLUTIONS TO HOUSING NEEDS

II. A. Non-Governmental Constraints on New Housing

Production of new housing units is affected by several non-governmental constraints: financing, land cost, development costs, costs of labor and materials, and developer's profit.

Financing is a problem in both availability and cost. Generally, as financing becomes scarce, the cost (interest rate) also rises. In the 1979-80 period, it was difficult to find loans for housing, and the interest rate reached 16-17%.

In 1983-84, financing is readily available, but rates remain at 12-14 percent. The effect on homebuyers of different rates is shown by the following table of monthly payments at different interest rates, using a 30-year, \$100,000 loan.

<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Payment</u>
9	\$ 805
13	\$1106
17	\$1426

Financing also affects the purchase price of new housing, since the developer must borrow to buy the land and build the housing. Clearly, when construction loans are at 14 %, the cost of the new house will be higher than if the loan had been at 8 %.

Interest rates and financing availability are largely determined by national economic trends and political manipulation. The current administration has indicated that policies favoring housing finance are being redirected to encourage investment in industrial renovation.

Land cost also affects the price of housing. A lot selling for \$30,000, rather than \$20,000, will not simply add \$10,000 to the cost of a home, for two reasons. First, lenders have set home value/land ratios. So a bank will expect a house on the \$30,000 lot to cost 50 % more than a house on a \$20,000 lot. This has encouraged larger houses with more and more extras included: fireplaces, appliances, dens, laundry rooms, etc. In addition, the developer's profit is generally added in as a percentage, so a larger more expensive house results in a larger profit and an even higher sales price.

Since Albany is a mostly developed, urban city, land costs are high. Most of the large vacant parcels in Albany have been owned by the developers for some time (1978 or earlier), so this may reduce the effect on prices of land cost. Isolated vacant single-family lots do not sell often (perhaps one per year), but recent sale prices have been between \$30,000 (25' lot) and \$40,000 (50' lot).

Development costs are made up of the cost remaining to the developer exclusive of land costs, construction costs, profit and financing. They generally consist of professional design costs, cost of public improvements (streets, sidewalks, utility extensions, etc.). Design costs have risen like everything else with inflation. However, design costs are higher in a built-up area. This results from -

- (a) working on smaller parcels with less design flexibility and fewer units to share the design cost,
- (b) working on more difficult, steep parcels with higher soils engineering costs and much higher construction costs,
- (c) working on parcels where the new development must fit into an existing pattern or scale of development, and
- (d) working at higher densities, where building safety codes require more expensive types of construction and where parking spaces must be provided in multi-level garages or decks which are more expensive than at-grade parking.

Most sites in Albany have existing public streets and utilities, so the effect of those improvements on housing prices is minimized.

Labor and materials have also gone up in price, even with the industry adopting many lower-cost materials and labor-saving techniques. Factory-built housing is still the exception; most houses and multiple units are stick-built on site with attendant waste and delays for weather.

II. B. Governmental Constraints on Housing

Governmental actions affect the price of housing, although there is no agreement on the magnitude of the effect.

This section discusses Albany's land use restrictions, zoning densities, project review procedures, property tax rates, and permit fees.

Albany's land use designations have remained stable for many years, probably since the late 1940s. The only exclusively non-residential areas are the bay waterfront and the industrial areas. The two major commercial streets are strip-zoned commercial, but this also allows residential development as discussed above. The remainder of the City is zoned residential. Roughly two-thirds of the City's residential areas are zoned single-family, and one-third multiple. These two categories were about equal prior to 1978, when the area between Masonic and Stannage Avenues were rezoned to single-family by voter initiative. Zoning densities begin at approximately 12 units per acre in the single-family zones and hillside development zones. With second units allowed on lots of 4000 square feet or more (about 46 percent of all lots in Albany) the theoretical potential density could be slightly higher than 12 units per acre. Note that Albany's single-family density would be considered medium density or even high density in more outlying areas: most new suburban single-family subdivisions are 4-5 units per acre, with townhouse developments averaging 10 units per acre.

Multiple residential densities begin at 35 units per acre, and range up to 87 units per acre. Although State law provides up to a 25-percent bonus in density for developers proposing 25-percent low-income units, there has been no interest in this locally due to two factors:

- (a) All new developments in Albany are higher-income units, due to the high land cost and the fact that it is view property.
- (b) A higher density (from the bonus) would require a different, more expensive form of construction.

Albany's development review procedure has some of the lowest fees (\$100 to \$200) and quickest processing times (one to two months from application to approval) of any jurisdiction in the bay area. This is due to the efficiency of a small-sized City government, the lack of a backlog of many project applications, and the fact that Environmental Impact Reports are generally not needed for small and medium-size projects since all services exist.

Property tax rates were once a local option and had some influence on a developer's choice of where to build and on the annual cost of housing to the consumer. Now property tax rates are basically the same everywhere, are limited to 1 percent, (Except for voter-approved increases, and pre-Prop 13 voter-approved liability) and are fixed at the 1976 rate as long as the property does not change hands. As discussed above, this is good for long-term home owners. However, new purchasers are hit with property taxes based on the current value as shown by the sales price. This means that two houses of equal value can be assessed at \$60,000 and \$130,000, because one has sold since 1978 and the other has not. The annual tax payments would be \$600 and \$1300, respectively. Due to the



1 percent limit, however, both of these amounts are probably substantially less than the pre-1978 rates.

Permit fees in Albany are among the lowest in the Bay Area, as shown in 1981 ABAG survey. Not only are construction permit fees low, but Albany has only \$75.00 per sewer connection fee in addition. Other jurisdictions have much higher sewer connection fees, plus an assortment of additional school, park, and street impact fees which can add up to thousands of dollars.

Albany's charter requires a 2/3 voter approval of bond issues, including revenue bond issues. In addition, a voter initiative in 1978 imposed a two space per unit parking requirement on new residential construction, as well as rezoning some multiple residential areas to single-family.

Most of Albany's remaining building sites have all utilities and street improvements. The north end of Madison must be extended, and minor street widenings, main extensions etc. are sometimes required. In general this has not been a major impediment to housing construction in Albany.

Energy Conservation

State law requires that new subdivisions be reviewed for maximizing of energy conservation potential, and that all new construction meet very restrictive energy conservation standards. State law also requires cities to say in their housing elements what they are doing for energy conservation in residential development. Recognizing that

- (a) energy conservation adds to the initial cost of housing ownership, and
- (b) design flexibility for energy conservation is severely limited on the infill parcels which are available in Albany.

Albany intends to comply with State laws requiring energy conservation review of new developments and energy conservation measures in new construction. Albany also makes available information on the PG&E ZIP program; energy conservation measures are eligible to be included in City rehabilitation loans.

III. HOUSING GOALS, POLICIES AND PROGRAM

GOAL: A DECENT HOME AND SUITABLE LIVING ENVIRONMENT
FOR ALBANY RESIDENTS (PRESENT AND FUTURE) OF
ALL ECONOMIC LEVELS.

POLICY NO. 1: Preserve and maintain the existing housing
stock.

Policy *1-A: Assist low-income homeowners with
measures needed to maintain existing
homes and to improve energy con-
servation.

PROGRAM: The City will continue its Housing Con-
servation program, as long as Federal
Community Development Block Grant funds are
received through the Alameda Urban County.
This program provides low-interest loans to
low-income resident homeowners for work needed
to bring their homes up to current building and
energy code requirements. At current Federal funding
levels, the City is able to assist three to five
owners per year, (*) for a five-year maximum goal of

(*) When Federal CDBG funding was at a higher
level, the City was assisting 10 to 15 owners
per year, and there was no backlog of applications.
This indicates that at least 15 houses per year are
suitable for rehabilitation.

25 homes. City-funded work generally does not directly increase the price of the house. Although the intrinsic value of the home is improved, this is not the kind of work that is directly reflected in a higher selling price. The amount of property improvement (as opposed to repair) is strictly limited. The City also maintains an HCD-funded Tool Bank which lends home maintenance tools at no cost to low-income City residents.

Through the Alameda Urban County HCD Program, the City has available a subsidized Minor Home Repair Program for low-income seniors and disabled persons. The Urban County also operates a low-interest loan rehabilitation program for rental units in Albany in which the landlord must agree to keep rents at low-income levels.

Policy *1-B: Encourage maintenance of existing housing, especially rental housing.

PROGRAM: The City currently has no general housing maintenance program. Only if a house or rental unit has become dilapidated and actually unfit for habitation can the City do anything. Other cities, such as El Cerrito, require an annual inspection of rental units. Some cities require inspections of owner-occupied units on sale, correction of hazardous

conditions and sometimes minimal energy conservation improvements. The City should establish an inspection program for rental units. This could be funded entirely by

inspection fees. However, given the number of rental units, and the lack of any indication of significant deterioration the City will continue to enforce the Housing Code on a complaint basis. The City could also establish an inspection program for owner-occupied units. However, recent experience indicates that purchasers of homes in Albany usually significantly upgrade the homes, so a mandatory inspection program might only be an added cost with relatively little benefit.

POLICY Maintain an adequate supply of rental housing.
NO.2:

Policy *2-A: Restrict condominium conversions.

PROGRAM: Condominium conversions do not eliminate every rental unit in the converted building. However, the individually owned units which become rentals are always at a higher rent than previously, because the converter's profit plus the cost of current high interest rate financing both increase the cost substantially. The City will maintain its existing condominium conversion ordinance which restricts the number of converted units in one year to 3 percent of the existing rental stock, prohibits conversion of existing low-income rental units unless equivalent replacement housing is

available, provides ample notice and moving expense reimbursements to displaced tenants, requires rehabilitation of the structure, and requires special treatment for elderly and handicapped tenants. Since the adoption of this ordinance in 1980, there have been six applications for conversion of a total of 98 units. Five applications (38 units; about 3% of Albany's total rental stock) were approved. One proposed conversion of 60 units was denied because adequate low-income replacement housing was not available.

Policy * 2-B: Encourage construction of new rental housing.

PROGRAM: The City cannot do much in this area. Financing for rental housing has been tight or unavailable for several years, although this may change in the future. The City and Urban County should continue to allocate a portion of Urban County CDBG funds for land banking and construction assistance for low-income rental housing assistance, and should attempt to interest developers in this program.

Policy * 2-C: Restrict conversion of rental housing units to other uses.

PROGRAM: As pointed out earlier, there has been in recent years a slow but steady trend of residential rented units in commercial areas being converted to commercial uses (generally offices). This benefits the City very little: there is some increased business license revenue, but we lose a residential unit (usually lower-cost) and increase daytime parking problems in the commercial areas. The

City will hold public hearings in 1985, to consider Zoning Ordinance to prohibit conversion of existing residential units in commercial and commercial expansion areas, except under special circumstances.

residential units in commercial and commercial expansion areas, except under special circumstances.

Policy * 2-D: Provide rental subsidies for low-income renters.

PROGRAM: The City should continue to participate in the Federally funded Section 8 rental subsidy program administered by the Alameda County Housing Authority which currently subsidizes 17 units in Albany. There are three obstacles to getting further units:

- (a) There is a need for senior certificates, but the certificates available are for families;
- (b) Albany rents are generally higher than Section 8 authorized rents;
- (c) The Federal government is not expanding this program.

POLICY NO.3: Allow and encourage the construction of new housing units sufficient to meet Albany's share of future regional growth.

Policy * 3-A: Eliminate, where feasible, constraints on new housing construction.

PROGRAM: The City will, in 1985, hold public hearings to consider whether existing parking requirements for multiple residential units are appropriate. The City should also investigate the feasibility and possible cost savings of financing

public improvements for new developments through assessment districts and issuance of tax-free municipal bonds, before 1986.

The City should maintain its existing zoning on vacant residential parcels, which allows for 502 (632, less 130 built since 1980) new units to be built in the next five years. Although these units will be high-income units, addition of this many units at the top end should free up units at the low-income end through filtering. (Filtering is the process by which a new unit is occupied by an upper-income household, thus freeing up an existing unit for a lower-income household). The City's Charter makes it very difficult for the City to issue mortgage revenue bonds for residential development, because a two-thirds majority is required. However, the City should participate in any future bond issue by Alameda County, as it did in 1983, in order to reduce the financing cost of new housing. The City, in 1985 will hold public hearings to consider whether the existing charter provision on revenue bonds should be revised.

Policy *3-B: Encourage second units for low-income renters in single-family areas.

PROGRAM: The City has already adopted a second-unit ordinance which allows second units on a minimum lot size of 4000 square feet, and requires them to be rented to low-income persons at affordable rents. However, current parking requirements of two spaces per

unit constrain development of second units to less than five units per year. The City, in 1985, will hold public hearings to consider whether this parking requirement should be revised.

Policy * 3-C: Encourage residential units in commercial developments.

PROGRAM: Current zoning regulations allow residential units by use permit in the upper stories of a commercial building.

The City will hold public hearings in 1985, to consider to allow residential units in upper stories, with commercial uses requiring a use permit. This would encourage rental units in areas convenient to shopping and public transit where parking could be shared.

Policy * 3-D: Encourage higher density residential development of under-utilized University of California property. (non-San Pablo/Buchanan frontage). Change zoning of property to reflect City-desired land uses.

PROGRAM: The City has no control over these lands, but the University of California should be encouraged to develop these lands with high density residential units, with commercial use on the San Pablo/Buchanan frontage.

Policy * 3-E: Encourage the construction of housing for low-income senior citizens.

PROGRAM: State and Federal funding for these programs has virtually ended. However, the City should work with non-profit housing developers to achieve the development of senior housing in Albany, and encourage participation of local seniors and other interested citizens in this process.

may be available from public or private sources.

The City will hold public hearings in 1985, to consider whether special parking requirements would be appropriate for permanent senior housing.

Policy * 3-F: Ensure that housing is available to all citizens, regardless of race, sex, age, or religion, in accordance with state and federal laws.

PROGRAM: Although the City has no program of its own, as part of the Alameda Urban County HCD Program a non-profit agency (Operation Sentinel) is under contract to provide fair housing counseling and monitoring in Albany and Emeryville.

Policy * 3-G: Ask that other cities and counties also provide housing to equal the jobs created by new development in those cities and counties.

PROGRAM: The City will request ABAG and the State HCD Department to consider this policy in their review of EIR's and Housing Elements.

III. THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

In recent years, the State Legislature has passed several bills requiring that cities adopt a more comprehensive approach in developing their General Plans, and that they consider the importance of the natural environment in planning. State Law now requires adoption of an open space element and a conservation element, as well as consistency of the zoning ordinance with the general plan (Government Code, Sections 65563 and 65853). In recognition of the relationship between land use planning and environmental hazards, the State also requires the preparation of a seismic safety element (Government Code, Sections 65302 (f) and 65302.2) and a safety element (Government Code, Section 65302.1). This requirement directs local government to identify and evaluate environmental hazards, and to formulate policies, regulations and programs to reduce risk. The legislation places the responsibility of protecting public safety and minimizing property damage on the local government.

In view of the above legislative mandate and in response to the particular local characteristics of the community, this chapter of the General Plan includes open space and conservation, seismic safety, and safety. Separating discrete portions of the environment from one another is essentially an artificial device, which allows one to make certain decisions in regard to particular issues such as seismic safety, or preservation of open space. However, it should be kept in mind that areas such as Albany Hill or the shoreline embody issues which are pertinent to open space, as well as to conservation, and to seismic safety also. The approach of this section of the Plan will be to attempt to integrate these issues. The Open Space and Conservation portion of the Natural Environment chapter of the General Plan considers two types of open space applicable to Albany: the first deals with public open space for recreational activities, including all the city parks; the second deals with open space used for areas of outstanding natural, scenic, or cultural value. This category includes the Bay shoreline, Codornices Creek and Cerrito Creek, as well as portions of Albany Hill. The wildlife that exists in Albany consists of birds who feed in the marsh

along the shoreline and natural vegetation which is concentrated on portions of Albany Hill that remain undeveloped. The preservation of certain natural resources is the responsibility of regional agencies, whose jurisdictions supersede the local agency. Therefore the Bay Conservation and Development Commission is responsible for the conservation and development of the Bay, the Bay Area Air Quality Control Board for air quality, and the Regional Water Quality Control Board for water quality.

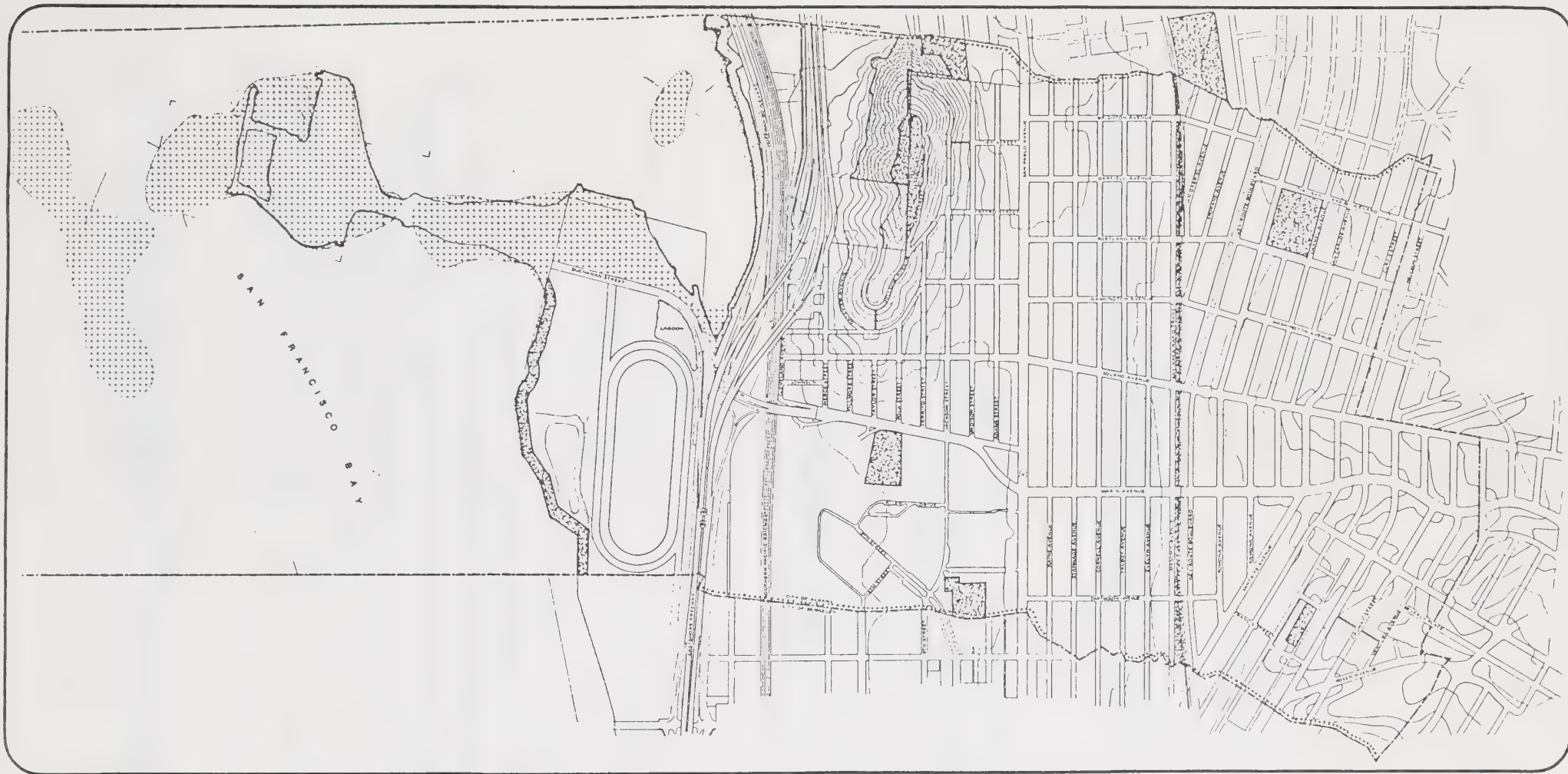
A. OPEN SPACE AND CONSERVATION

Albany contains a total of 29.6 acres of public open space. The scarcity of vacant land in the community limits the potential for new, large recreation areas. Surveys conducted in 1969 as part of the Parks and Recreation Plan indicate respondent preferences for the following types of neighborhood recreation facilities: space for free play, family picnic areas, children's playlots, a neighborhood center building, as well as a nature hobby area. Respondents also indicated a desire for a swimming pool and community recreation facilities. Since the completion of this survey the City has acquired several additional open space areas including the Albany Hill Overlook Park (5.2 acres) and the Creekside Park (4 acres), and plans to purchase a portion of the Gill Tract adjacent to the Middle School site (3 acres). The BART linear park, (5.5 acres) owned by BART and maintained by the City, provides additional open space.





While there is very little vacant land within the central portions of the City to provide additional recreation areas, there are several natural areas which offer opportunities for open space that should be preserved and protected. These include the Bay shoreline, the undeveloped portions of Albany Hill, and Cerrito Creek and Codornices Creek. Existing and proposed open space and conservation areas are delineated in Map 2. In view of the existing public open space, the opportunities for new open space, and the desirability of conserving and protecting the natural areas in Albany the following statements of public policy are appropriate.

POLICY 1: IMPROVE EXISTING PARKS AND RECREATION AREAS IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE MAXIMUM USE OF EXISTING FACILITIES.

The City should complete improvements scheduled in Memorial Park and Tevlin Park as indicated in the Parks and Recreation Plan. These parks, centrally located,



MAP 2 OPEN SPACE AND CONSERVATION

-  OPEN SPACE - RECREATION
-  OPEN SPACE - CONSERVATION
-  CREEK SIDE CONSERVATION (GENERALIZED)
-  Albany Waterfront Master Plan

(SEE MAP A: GENERAL PLAN REVISIONS FOR ACCURATE DELINATION OF WATERFRONT MASTER PLAN AREA.)

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22 provide much-needed neighborhood recreation facilities.

POLICY 3: RECOGNIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF THE SHORELINE AS AN OPEN SPACE OF SCENIC BEAUTY, AND PROVIDE ACCESS TO THE SHORELINE FOR RECREATIONAL USE.

a) The City should investigate ways of providing access to the shoreline, and the means of developing a walkway along the shoreline that can be used and enjoyed by residents of the City. The City should negotiate with Golden Gate Fields to provide public access to the shoreline in the areas behind the race track, between the Buchanan Street Interchange and the area where the flat portion of the shoreline ends. A 50 foot-wide walkway and a bike path could be established and used by the public when the track was not in season.

b) Preserve the scenic value of the shoreline by prohibiting the construction of any building or structure within 100 feet of the shoreline, except as specified in the Albany Waterfront Master Plan.

c) Recognize the value of the Hoffman Marsh off the shoreline, located north and west of the Buchanan Street Interchange, and prohibit any activity in that area that would disturb the bird feeding activities. The Marine Environmental Impact Analysis: Widening Route 17 Along Shoreline of Richmond, California states:

"Regional comparisons of the Hoffman Boulevard mud flat and salt marsh appear to rank it as one of the highest shorebird use areas within the state, and perhaps within San Francisco Bay, although its size and attractions would seem to be of lesser quality than many other areas."*

* URS Research Company: Marine Environmental Impact Analysis: Widening Route 17 Along Shoreline of Richmond, California, p. 36, September 1973, San Mateo, California.

POLICY 4: PROTECT AND PRESERVE THE CREEKS IN ALBANY.

Codornices Creek forms the southern border of Albany, and Cerrito Creek the northern boundary, separating the City from the neighboring communities. Over time both creeks have been ignored, and urban development has destroyed much of the natural beauty these areas possessed. The City should attempt to restore these creeks to their previous natural state, to protect the creekway in areas where it has not been culverted. The City should implement the provisions of the Creek Restoration Program approved by the City Council on December 5, 1977; in addition, the following actions are also recommended:

- a) **Buildings** or structures should be located at least 20 feet from the creek bank.
- b) Enforce more stringently the provision in the City Code requiring that property owners keep creek channels clean, especially near the El Cerrito Plaza Shopping Center.
- c) Protect natural creekside vegetation in the area of Creekside Park. Keep improvements to the minimum required to provide sitting areas.
- d) Investigate the possibility of replanting near the creek in areas where natural vegetation has been completely destroyed. Such a project could be undertaken by a conservation group or as a school project or in coordination with the University of California. The area where this would be particularly appropriate would be on the portion of the Codornices Creek that runs west of San Pablo Avenue, adjacent to the University of California University Village property. If the University develops that portion of the property which borders the creek, it should be encouraged to landscape the creekside area.

POLICY 5: PROTECT VIEWS OF THE CITY AND THE SCENIC VALUE OF UNDEVELOPED PORTIONS OF ALBANY HILL.

Any new development on the east portion of the hill should be designed in such a way as to preserve the native vegetation of the hill, and preserve the form of the hill. The policies and standards contained in the Albany Hill Area Specific

24 Plan shall be followed. In the Hillside Zoning Districts, a use permit shall be required to remove any trees on the hill. Grading on the hill shall be subject to the Specific Plan and Chapter 70 of the Uniform Building Code.

Development shall be prohibited within the area 200 feet west of the ridgeline identified on the Open Space and Conservation Map to preserve the view from the top of the hill.

POLICY 6: RECOGNIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF LANDSCAPING IN PROVIDING A SENSE OF THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND RELIEF FROM URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AS WELL AS INCREASING THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL AREAS, AND OF PROVIDING VISUAL INTEREST TO THE COMMUNITY.

In areas lacking trees and landscaping the City should encourage street tree planting to increase the attractiveness of residential areas. The City could provide a variety of trees to home-owners at cost and dig required holes when a group of neighbors are able to coordinate their actions. Such an approach would encourage improvements on a block basis and thereby increase the attractiveness of a neighborhood. The City could require that owners sign an agreement to maintain trees for a certain period of time, such as the period required for a tree to become well established.

B. SEISMIC SAFETY

The Seismic Safety portion of the General Plan identifies seismic hazards, defined as sources of seismically-induced danger for injury or damage to man and/or property. The City of Albany is situated in a region affected by two major fault zones - the San Andreas Fault, about 15 miles to the west, and the Hayward Fault, about one mile to the east. Major earthquakes have occurred historically along each fault, and seismic data and geologic information indicate that future severe earthquakes are capable of being generated. It is impossible to precisely predict the magnitude and occurrence of an earthquake; however, it can be expected that major earthquakes will occur and cause severe damage.

A report prepared by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration in 1972 entitled A Study of Earthquake Forces in the San Francisco Bay Area described the ground shaking intensity to be expected if seismic activity were to occur along

the San Andreas and Hayward Faults. The intensity for a given area was chiefly a function of the distance from the earthquake and the generalized local geologic conditions. Three intensity maps were prepared - for magnitudes 8.3, 7.0 and 6.0 on the Richter scale, to be intended for use as a "...general guide to the probable distribution of intensity in the specified earthquake. For a detailed evaluation of a particular site such maps must be used in conjunction with other geological and engineering data that may be available." The maps indicate that at any given magnitude, the intensity on bay mud and fill areas will be much more severe than elsewhere. Using the Modified Mercalli Intensity Scale (see Table 3), it was determined that a magnitude 8.3 earthquake (equivalent to the 1906 San Francisco Earthquake) would produce in Albany an intensity of IX in the area generally west of I-80, and an intensity of VIII to the east. At a magnitude 6 earthquake, the western area would have an intensity of VII, and the area to the east an intensity of VI.

Table 4 indicates potential seismic hazards in Albany and areas where such hazards are likely to occur; the location of hazards in Albany are illustrated in Map 3. The table provides generalized information only, and detailed studies of specific sites are necessary to determine the extent of hazard. Guidelines for the seismic safety and safety elements of the General Plan require that communities define a level of acceptable risk which reduces the loss of life and property damage due to seismic activity to an acceptable level. Because Map 3 identifies only very generalized areas susceptible to seismic hazards, it does not seem appropriate to establish levels of risk based on permitted land uses in the various seismic hazard areas. Rather, such levels of acceptable risk should define the kinds of site studies to be done prior to development.

In Albany, by coincidence, the areas that are undeveloped are also those areas that are most susceptible to seismic-geologic hazards, including the bay fill areas, potential bay fill areas, and the undeveloped portions of Albany Hill. The plan recommendations suggest studies for those areas which will identify the type of risk on particular properties as well as indicate actions that may be taken to reduce the risk. In existing developed areas, the standards of the latest approved Building Code, representing the best thinking of the current state-of-the-art, are recommended to insure that any new development will structurally withstand earthquake damage.

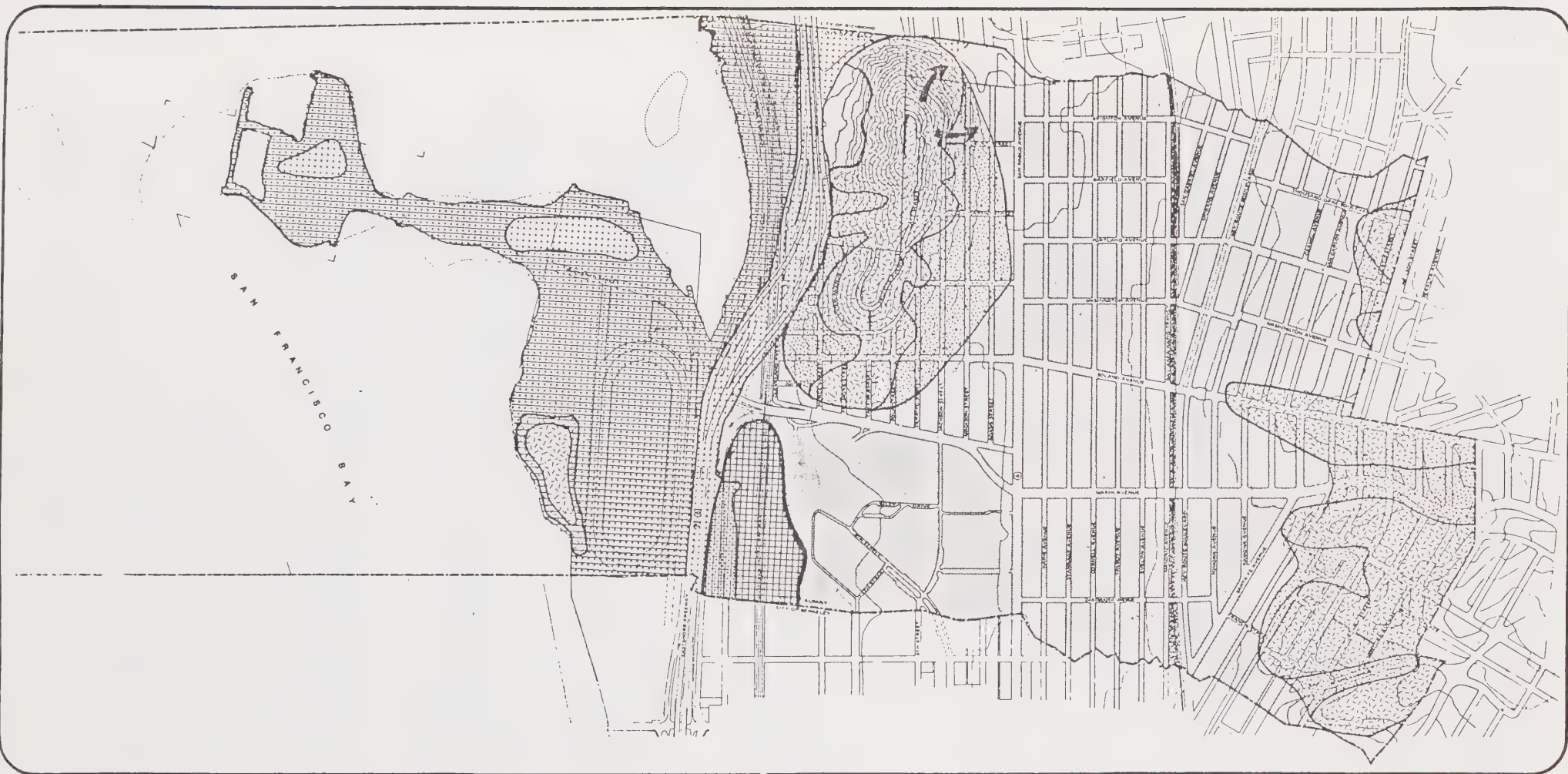
TABLE 3 MODIFIED MERCALLI INTENSITY SCALE (1931)

- I. Not felt except by a very few under especially favorable circumstances.
 - II. Felt only by a few persons at rest, especially on upper floors of buildings. Delicately suspended objects may swing.
 - III. Felt quite noticeably indoors, especially on upper floors of buildings, but many people do not recognize it as an earthquake. Standing motor cars may rock slightly. Vibration like passing of truck. Duration estimated.
 - IV. During the day felt indoors by many, outdoors by few. At night some awakened. Dishes, windows, doors disturbed; walls make cracking sound. Sensation like heavy truck striking building. Standing motor cars rocked noticeably.
 - V. Felt by nearly everyone; many awakened. Some dishes, windows, etc., broken; a few instances of cracked plaster; unstable objects overturned. Disturbance of trees, poles and other tall objects sometimes noticed. Pendulum clocks may stop.
 - VI. Felt by all, many frightened and run outdoors. Some heavy furniture moved; a few instances of fallen plaster or damaged chimneys. Damage slight.
 - VII. Everybody runs outdoors. Damage negligible in buildings of good design and construction; slight to moderate in well-built ordinary structures; considerable in poorly built or badly designed structures; some chimneys broken. Noticed by persons driving motor cars.
 - VIII. Damage slight in specially designed structures; considerable in ordinary substantial buildings with partial collapse; great in poorly built structures. Panel walls thrown out of frame structures. Fall of chimneys, factory stacks, columns, monuments, walls. Heavy furniture overturned. Sand and mud ejected in small amounts. Changes in well water. Disturbs persons driving motor cars.
 - IX. Damage considerable in specially designed structures; well designed frame structures thrown out of plumb; great in substantial buildings, with partial collapse. Buildings shifted off foundations. Ground cracked conspicuously. Underground pipes broken.
 - X. Some well-built wooden structures destroyed; most masonry and frame structures destroyed with their foundations; ground badly cracked. Rails bent. Landslides considerable from river banks and steep slopes. Shifted sand and mud. Water splashed (slopped) over banks.
 - XI. Few, if any (masonry) structures remain standing. Bridges destroyed. Broad fissures in ground. Underground pipe lines completely out of service. Earth slumps and land slips in soft ground. Rails bent greatly.
 - XII. Damage total. Waves seen on ground surfaces. Lines of sight and level distorted. Objects thrown upward into the air.
-

NOTE: Modified Mercalli Intensity Scale is usually given in Roman Numerals.

TABLE 4 IDENTIFICATION OF EXISTING SEISMIC AND GEOLOGIC HAZARDS

Type of Hazard	Area in Albany Potentially Susceptible to Hazard
Ground Shaking - can be felt at great distances from earthquake center; in Bay Area can be expected to be strong during magnitude 7.3 and stronger earthquakes.	Bay muds west of I-80; fill areas over bay mud; alluvial soils between the Bay and the Berkeley Hills (requires site evaluation).
Ground Failure - a. liquefaction (loss of strength in water-saturated cohesionless soil during strong ground shaking).	Dependent on depth of water table; depth of sand, gravel, or silt deposits that may be present; presence of a free face toward which soil would flow; and the maximum probable severity of earthquake ground motion. (Requires detailed site evaluation.)
b. lateral spreading and earth lurching (movement and cracking of soils during strong ground shaking).	Occurs in areas susceptible to liquefaction (requires evaluation of soil liquefaction data).
c. landsliding (most likely to occur on weakly consolidated soils or rock mantle, on steep slopes, and saturated earth materials).	Albany Hill, particularly steep slopes, existing unstable slopes, and areas of heavily-fractured and jointed rocks.
d. differential settlement (non-uniform compaction of loose- to medium-dense granular soils during strong ground shaking).	Filled areas over bay mud and former sloughs; areas underlain by peat and sand bases.
Seismically-triggered Flooding - Tsunami (long sea waves caused by under-water seismic disturbances).	Elevations less than ten feet, particularly low waterfront areas.



MAP 3 SEISMIC AND GEOLOGIC HAZARD SUSCEPTIBILITY

- | | |
|-------------------|--------------------------------|
| BEDROCK | * INUNDATION BY 100-YEAR FLOOD |
| ALLUVIUM | INUNDATION BY 200-YEAR TSUNAMI |
| COLLUVIUM | HISTORIC LANDSLIDES |
| FILL OVER BAY MUD | |

THIS MAP IS BASED ON INFORMATION COMPILED FROM
SAN FRANCISCO BAY REGION ENVIRONMENT AND RESOURCES
PLANNING STUDY.
MAPS ENTITLED: MISC. FIELD STUDIES MAPS 429, 480, & 493;
INTERPRETIVE REPORT NO. 4.

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* For a more detailed and up-to-date mapping of the area subject to inundation by a 100-Year Flood, see the Flood Insurance Rate Map prepared by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, February 1, 1980.

Amended 4/80.

POLICY 1: UTILIZE AVAILABLE GEOLOGIC DATA AT ALL STAGES OF PLANNING AND THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS, IN AREAS INDICATED ON THE SEISMIC AND GEOLOGIC HAZARDS SUSCEPTIBILITY MAP AND IDENTIFIED IN TABLE 4.

- a) Such data should be as detailed as possible for the preparation and revision of Zoning and Grading ordinances.
- b) Geologic-engineering site studies should be required for proposed developments within various hazard areas indicated on Map 3.

POLICY 2: ADOPT THE LATEST BUILDING CODE STANDARDS TO ENSURE STRUCTURAL SAFETY.

The City should adopt the latest Uniform Building Code and the Recommended Lateral Force requirements and Commentary prepared by the Structural Engineers Association of California. The preparation of specific soils and/or geotechnical studies shall be required in areas subject to seismic and geologic hazards; measures to mitigate potential hazards shall be included in the project design.

POLICY 3: INITIATE A STRUCTURAL HAZARDS ABATEMENT PROGRAM.

- a) The Albany City Council should authorize the proposed Community Services Engineer in coordination with a structural engineer to determine the significant structural hazard problems of the City, including those posed by structurally unsound residences, public buildings and other public facilities, and structural appendages such as large signs and marquees; and to formulate an abatement program tailored to solve those more specific problems with highest priority for structural hazards abatement, especially critical public buildings such as emergency facilities, utilities, and structures characterized by involuntary and high occupancy. In addition, because of the potential for a future earthquake of up to a magnitude of 8.3 on the Richter scale in the Bay Area, it is

30 recommended that reinforced masonry structures constructed in Albany be inspected to insure that they are in fact designed to resist lateral forces sufficiently to allow continued occupancy in the event of an 8.3 earthquake. A building found to be structurally unsafe should be removed or brought to acceptable standards. It should be acceptable to change the use of the building to one of a less critical nature, if this use is consistent with the overall General Plan.

A structure that is determined to be non-conforming to existing seismic safety standards may not necessitate immediate removal. In such cases, the following requirements should be imposed:

- If the building is damaged to more than a specified percent of its value, its use(s) should be terminated.
- The building itself should not be structurally expanded or attachments made thereon unless such expansion or attachments satisfy all existing building codes and their structural integrity is uncompromised by the portions of the building designated as non-conforming.
- In those cases where a change in use in terms of its occupancy characteristics is not practical or possible, the use of the building should be terminated after a certain period of time based on an equitable amortization schedule, and the existing uses designated as non-conforming acceptable risks should not be expanded in any way.

POLICY 4: GUIDELINES SHOULD BE DEVELOPED FOR THE TYPE OF FILL TO BE ALLOWED FOR FILLING MUD FLATS, SUBMERGED LAND AND SOFT LOW LANDS IN RELATION TO THE LAND USES FOR WHICH THE VARIOUS TYPES OF FILL CAN BE UTILIZED.

Because of the risk from seismic hazards and the potential for economic loss to individual homeowners as a result of settlement and differential settlement, no residential development should be permitted in such areas.

Specific site studies, in particular for ground shaking and slope instability, should be required for development proposals on Albany Hill.

C. SAFETY

All general plans must have a safety element which deals with the dangers posed by fire and geologic hazards. Non-seismic geologic hazards in Albany are limited to areas susceptible to slope instability on Albany Hill.* The City is also fortunate in regard to fire hazards, as there are no extensive grasslands or wooded areas that would present severe fire danger (Albany Hill, the major open area in Albany, is well-supplied with water). There are no PG&E gas storage tanks in Albany, nor are there any firms which manufacture or store explosive or flammable chemicals. A small portion of the City adjacent to Cerrito and Codornices Creeks is subject to a flood with a probability of occurring once every 100 years (the 100-Year Flood); See the Flood Insurance Rate Map prepared by the U.S. Department of Fire protection under normal circumstances is provided by the Albany Fire Department. Albany has cooperative agreements with the Cities of Berkeley, El Cerrito, and Richmond, for dealing with large fires or fires at or near the City boundaries. The danger of extensive fires in the developed portions of the City is greatest in the event of a major earthquake, when there is a possibility that gas mains and water mains would both be ruptured, and the fire departments of all the adjoining cities would also be as overworked as the Albany Fire Department. The small lot sizes in Albany can contribute to the spread of fire, particularly from garage to garage.

Water in Albany is provided by the East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD). EBMUD reserves are adequate to fill all needs short of a regional catastrophe, such as an earthquake. Albany is supplied by reservoirs east of the Berkeley Hills, but in case those lines are broken, emergency supplies can be obtained via lines through El Sobrante. Again, the only situation in which the alternate supply line is likely to be needed is after a severe earthquake.

Evacuation of residents from hazardous areas is also most likely to be necessary after a severe earthquake. In such a situation, it must be assumed that the freeways (I-80 and Route 17) will be unusable due to bridge and overpass failures. Thus, San Pablo Avenue in a north-south direction, and Solano and Marin Avenues in an east-west direction, would have to be used. These streets are all of adequate width to serve as evacuation routes. However, travel to the east may be impossible, as the Hayward Fault lies in that direction and if any surface

* For a more complete discussion of relevant geological conditions, see the Seismic Safety Element.

32 streets are impassable it would most likely be those nearer the fault. Also, it is possible that the overhead BART structure would collapse and block Solano and Marin Avenues.

The Alameda County Office of Emergency Preparedness has adopted an emergency plan. Albany's City Code also adopts an emergency plan, which is spelled out in a resolution adopted concurrently with that section of the code.

POLICY 1: MAINTAIN COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH FIRE DEPARTMENTS OF NEIGHBORING CITIES.

POLICY 2: CONTINUALLY UPDATE THE CITY'S EMERGENCY PLAN TO ASSURE THAT IT COMPLEMENTS THAT OF ALAMEDA COUNTY.

POLICY 3: REVIEW ALL CODE REQUIREMENTS FOR GARAGES IN ORDER TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF FIRES.

POLICY 4: INITIATE A STRUCTURAL HAZARD ABATEMENT PROGRAM TO REMOVE UNSAFE, FIRE-PRONE STRUCTURES.

This action should be coordinated with the housing maintenance and code enforcement programs suggested under the Residential Environment chapter and the Structural Hazard Abatement Program recommended in the Seismic Safety section.

POLICY 5: REGULATE DEVELOPMENT IN THE AREA SUBJECT TO INNUNDATION BY THE 100-YEAR FLOOD TO PREVENT DAMAGE DUE TO FLOODING.

IV. CIRCULATION

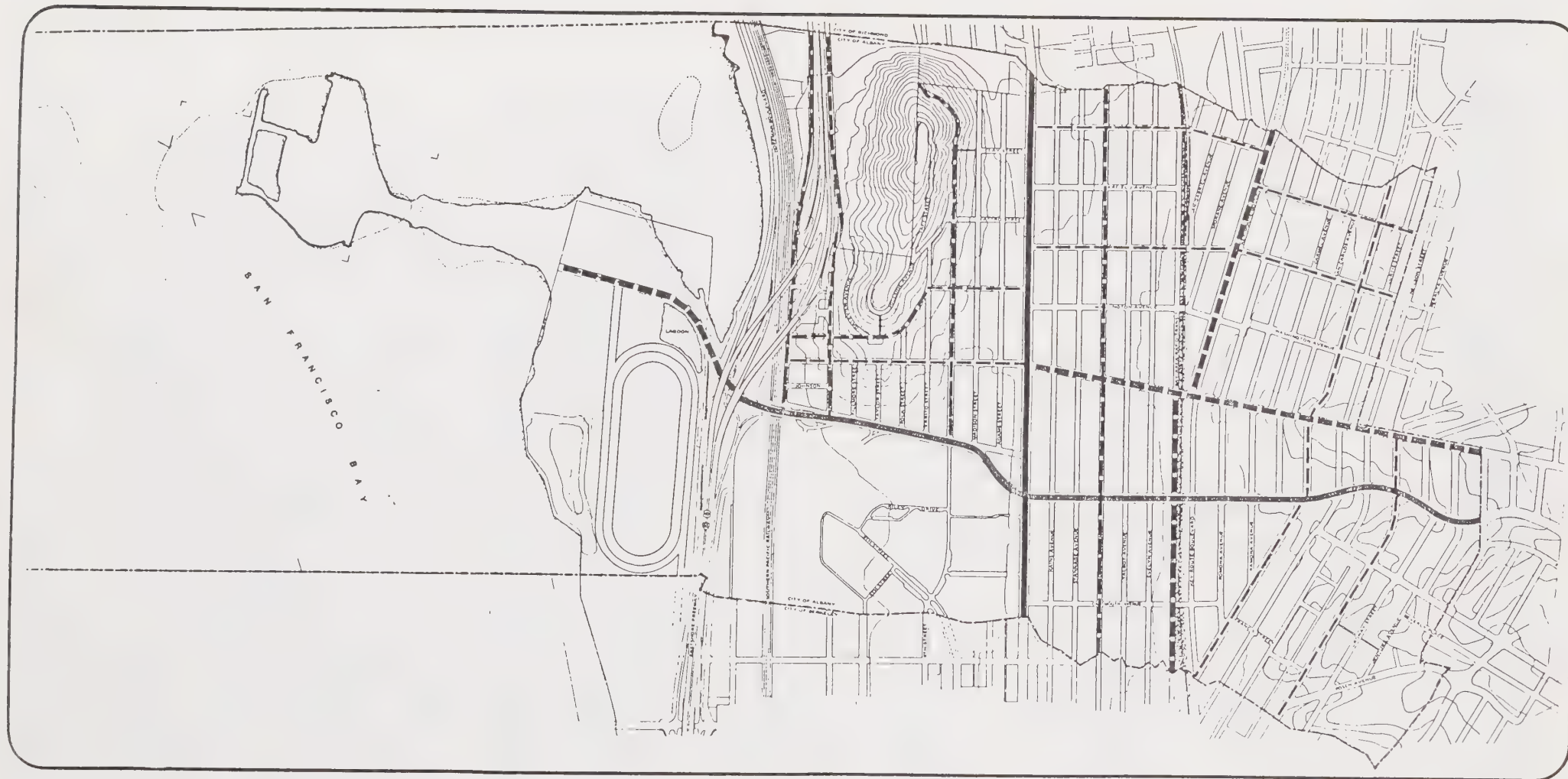
The Circulation Element, as defined by the Government Code (Sec. 65302) should spell out "The general location and extent of existing and proposed major thoroughfares, transportation routes, terminals, and other local public utilities and facilities, all correlated with the land use element of the general plan."

This chapter of the General Plan includes traffic and circulation, the scenic highways element, bicycle trails and the noise element.

A. TRAFFIC AND CIRCULATION

The circulation pattern in Albany has been established by the history and type of development and street patterns in the East Bay, and is characteristic of a residential community within a larger urban area. The Eastshore Freeway (Interstate 80), carrying north-south traffic, links Albany with adjacent East Bay communities. State Highway 17 provides a traffic link to the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge. The interchange of these two routes with Buchanan Street should be studied for possible improvements when the Albany Waterfront is developed. Improved access across the freeway by pedestrians and bicycles should be addressed.

In general, streets within Albany consist of relatively narrow, local streets, many considered substandard in width according to state definition. The east-west streets link the Berkeley Hills and adjacent portions of Kensington and Thousand Oaks to San Pablo Avenue and the freeway interchange at Buchanan Street. The north-south streets, excluding Key Route Boulevard, San Pablo Avenue and Masonic Avenue, carry light residential traffic. The narrow width of the streets, the fact that several of the streets end at the Albany border and do not link to other areas, and the presence of stop signs on every corner serve to discourage through-traffic in residential neighborhoods.



MAP4 CIRCULATION

- - - COLLECTOR
 ■ ■ ■ MINOR ARTERIAL
 — TYPE IV NON FREEWAY

NOTE: Delete Jackson Street as collector
North of Castro.*

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POLICY 1: MAINTAIN THE PROTECTED CHARACTER OF RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS. DISCOURAGE STREET WIDENING IN RESIDENTIAL AREAS. CHANNEL TRAFFIC TO COLLECTOR AND ARTERIAL STREETS. ADOPT THE FUNCTIONAL STREET CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM INDICATED IN MAP 4.

POLICY 2: ACCOMMODATE THROUGH-TRAFFIC FLOW, PARTICULARLY ON SAN PABLO AVENUE, SOLANO AVENUE, AND MARIN AVENUE, WITH A MINIMUM ADVERSE IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT OF THE CITY.

a) Marin Avenue: This street serves as a major link for east-west movement through the City between the eastern residential areas and the Buchanan Street Interchange and the Eastshore Freeway. Passing through a residential area east of San Pablo Avenue, with posted speed limits of 25 miles per hour, traffic often speeds through the area creating potential danger for pedestrians and school children from Marin School. There are no viable alternatives for rerouting traffic from this street to reduce the impact on the neighborhood; therefore the only alternative is to slow traffic so that pedestrians may cross the street where necessary.

Any modification to Marin Avenue not only has to consider the necessity of protecting pedestrians in crosswalks, but also must provide a smooth flow of traffic, and avoidance of traffic congestion or unnecessary impediments to traffic that create the potential for automobile accidents.

In order to provide safety for pedestrians, the City should encourage compliance with the 25 m.p.h. speed limit. Pedestrians have difficulty crossing due to the width of the street. Small pedestrian islands in the center of the street at appropriate intersections would allow shelter for the pedestrian. A yellow flashing light on the island would increase the visibility of the pedestrian crossing to approaching motorists.

b) Solano Avenue: Improvements to this street have added parking bays along the length of the street, curb improvements and street widening to improve the flow of traffic. The development of this street as a commercial and office center requires adequate provision for slower moving traffic, for parking and pedestrian movement. In order to insure safety of pedestrians and to emphasize the pedestrian-oriented commercial character of the street, curb cuts on Solano Avenue should be minimized. Parking for commercial structures should be placed at the

rear of commercial parcels. Buildings should not be set-back from Solano Avenue, and should continue the pedestrian commercial orientation of this street, except when pedestrian amenities are reinforced and further emphasized.

c) San Pablo Avenue: This roadway, U.S. Highway 40, prior to the construction of the Eastshore Freeway was the major north-south highway in the East Bay. Albany is reluctant to accept the State offer to transfer title of this street to the City due to the inadequate design of the roadway at this time and the cost of maintenance. The land use pattern along San Pablo reflects the character of the road as a major highway and arterial. Consisting of six lanes of moving traffic and two of parking, the street is developed with a variety of automobile-oriented retail facilities and signs that present a generally unattractive appearance for most of its length through the City. A 1972 report* on pedestrian safety in Albany indicated that the occurrence of accidents involving pedestrian injuries at signaled intersections was unusually high in Albany, especially at San Pablo Avenue crossings. The pattern of east-west street crossings at San Pablo Avenue is made difficult by the lack of direct crossing at all but Solano and Marin Avenues. The width of travel lanes is ten feet, while State standards recommend twelve feet per lane. The location of City Hall, the new Middle School site and the proposed open space adjacent to the school site indicate a change of use in the area adjacent to the Avenue, and increased traffic and pedestrian activity generated by these new uses. In view of the traffic constraints on San Pablo Avenue, the changed role of the street from a regional highway to an arterial of more local status, and the relation of the street to the commercial and residential areas of the City it is recommended that the street be redesigned to serve the following purposes:

- ▣ to increase the safety of vehicles, pedestrians and bicycles on the street;
- ▣ to improve the visual appearance of the street;
- ▣ to improve the appearance and vitality of the commercial environment.

* American Automobile Association: 1972 Pedestrian Safety Program Appraisal; Albany, California.

Street improvements should include:

- A reduction in the number of traffic lanes to two moving lanes in each direction, and an increase in the width of each lane to 12 feet.
- An improvement in the visual appearance of the street by planting shrubs and small street trees, developing bus shelters and kiosks of attractive design, encouraging the development of common parking areas for block units with access from adjoining streets, and providing a median with left turn lanes where appropriate to separate moving lanes of traffic.

The Cities of Berkeley and El Cerrito are both proposing plans for the improvement of San Pablo Avenue that would incorporate several of the design and traffic improvements suggested above. The street improvements could be financed by use of S.B. 325 money, or from Federal Aid Urban System monies; however, such improvements are expensive and other sources of revenue such as a special assessment district may be necessary to make the recommended improvements.

POLICY 3: LOCAL STREETS SHOULD REINFORCE THE RESIDENTIAL CHARACTER OF NEIGHBORHOODS.

Local streets in Albany, located between San Pablo Avenue and Masonic Avenue, are narrow in width, and make two-way travel difficult. The narrowness of the public right-of-way precludes the possibility of widening these streets, which carry local traffic generated by the generally low density residential uses in the area. Where possible local streets should be used to reinforce residential areas, by keeping out through-traffic, slowing down traffic and diverting traffic to the collector streets. Improvements to these streets should not permit any increase in traffic volumes.

POLICY 4: PROVIDE A VARIETY OF PUBLIC TRANSIT MODES TO ENCOURAGE USE OF PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION AND REDUCE RELIANCE ON AUTOMOBILE TRAVEL.

Albany is served by A.C. Transit which operates eleven bus routes in the City, and by BART with the nearest station located at the El Cerrito Plaza Shopping Center, adjacent to Albany. In order to provide more flexible transit service,

38 the City should study the feasibility of establishing a Dial-a-bus system to provide flexible service for areas within the City not served by the established bus routes. Most of the public transit routes provide service on San Pablo Avenue. Bus service on Solano Avenue is infrequent and connections to other parts of the City are difficult. Therefore a Dial-a-bus service would provide public transit to areas not adequately serviced by existing public transit lines. It would particularly benefit the elderly and physically handicapped residents who are not able to walk the distances to bus stops, and who have fewer transportation alternatives available to them.

An alternative to a Dial-a-bus system would be a shuttle bus that would link major points in the City including the Civic Center, University Village, Solano Avenue, the BART station, and the waterfront when that area is developed for recreational use. Such a service could operate a loop route, in one direction, since the loop could be completed in a short period of time given the size of the community.

B. SCENIC HIGHWAYS

State Route 17 (Hoffman Boulevard) and Interstate Route 80 border the San Francisco Bay shoreline for the length of Albany, and provide motorists with views of Mt. Tamalpais, the Golden Gate Bridge and the San Francisco Bay, and immediate views of Albany Hill and distant vistas to the east. North of Buchanan Street Interchange, Route 80 passes the industrial uses located on the "island" created by the Southern Pacific Tracks and the freeway. These uses, which consist of one story industrial uses and the railroad yard, present an unattractive appearance to passing motorists.

The State Scenic Highways Master Plan does not include any route in Albany for designation as an official state scenic highway. Scenic highway designation is not recommended for Albany routes. However, it is recommended that the visual quality of this corridor be preserved to the west and improved east of Route 17 and adjacent to Route 80.

POLICY 1: RECOGNIZE THE NEED FOR PRESERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE VISUAL AMENITIES FROM ROUTES 17 AND 80.

- that
- a) Ensure, through the design review process/industrial uses and railroad operations located adjacent to the freeways provide landscaping or be of high design

quality to shield the negative visual aspects of the industrial areas. Such landscaping should consist of shrubs and trees of sufficient height to screen any building, open yard or parking area from the view of the freeway.

b) In the future the utility lines should be placed underground to increase the attractiveness of the area.

c) Signs in the area should be regulated to avoid inappropriate or unattractive signs.

C. BICYCLE TRAILS

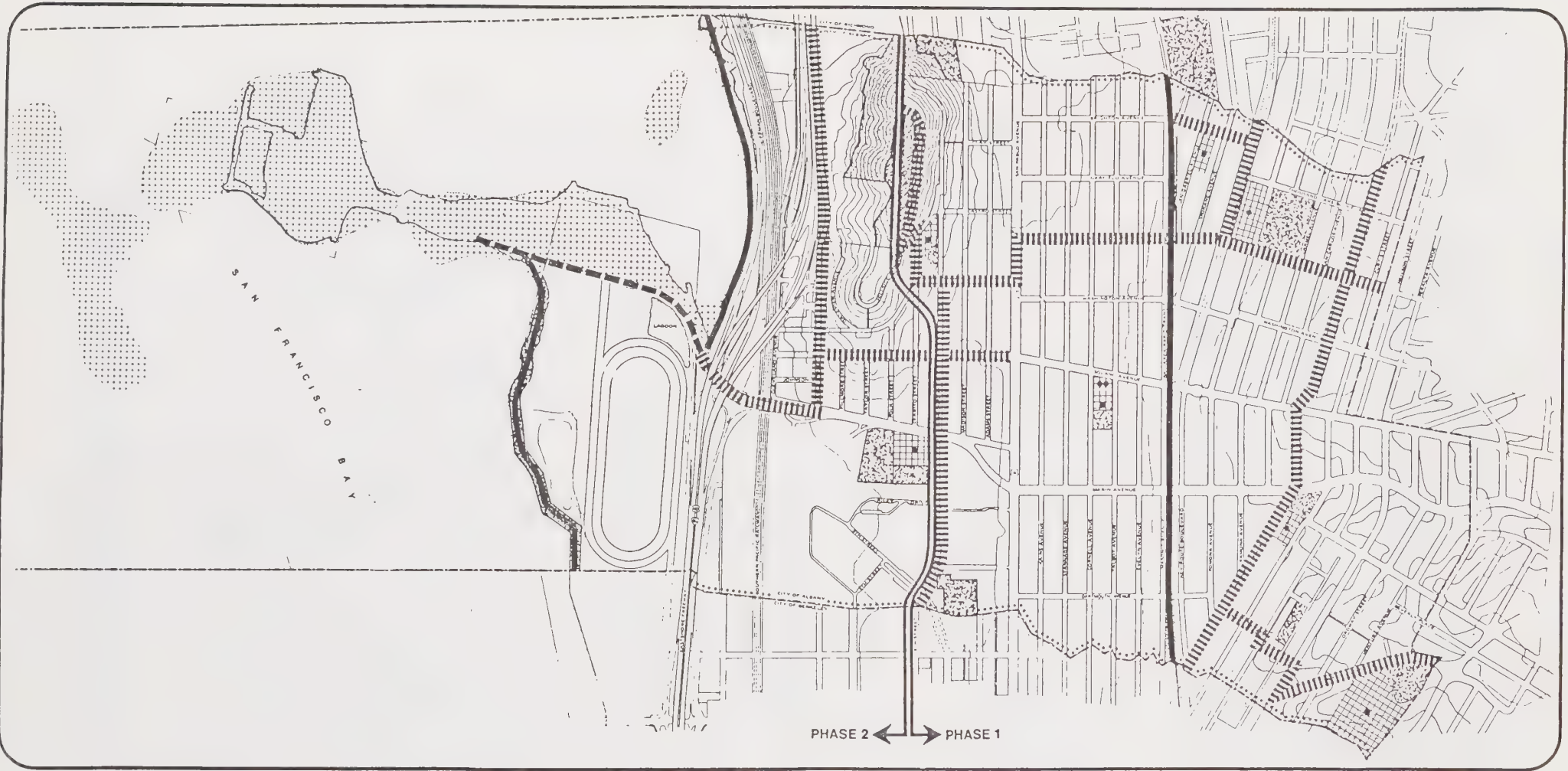
POLICY 1: PROVIDE BIKEWAYS THROUGHOUT THE CITY TO MAJOR DESTINATIONS TO ENSURE SAFETY TO BICYCLE USERS AND TO ENCOURAGE THIS MODE OF TRANSPORTATION.

There are several possible ways to develop bikeways including:

- ▣ Bike routes indicated by route signs on existing roads;
- ▣ Bike lanes indicated by route signs and bike lane striping;
- ▣ Bicycle paths consisting of a two-lane bicycle path, separated from traffic.

Given the character of development, width of streets, traffic volumes, and present pattern of bicycle travel, a two-phased system of bicycle ways (shown on Map 5) should be developed by the City. On local residential streets with a low volume of traffic, signs probably would be sufficient to direct bicycle traffic. Streets carrying high volumes of traffic would benefit from some design treatment to separate and protect bicycle traffic, if street width allows. The City should set aside a portion of S.B. 325 funds and seek other funding to provide bicycle facilities. Improvements, where possible, should be programmed to coincide with any street repaving or reconstruction, as well as any activity to underground utility lines, or to redirect traffic.

The first phase can be readily implemented to serve the bikeway needs of the major portion of the City. The second phase, which would require considerably



MAP 5 BIKeways

- PATH
- - - LANE
- ||||| ROUTE
- === PHASE BOUNDARY

- OPEN SPACE - RECREATION
- OPEN SPACE - CONSERVATION
- SCHOOLS
- LIBRARY
- CREEK-SIDE CONSERVATION

Albany Waterfront Master Plan
(See Map A: General Plan Revisions for accurate delineation of Waterfront Master Plan area.)

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more planning and expense, would serve the westerly region of the City as follows:

41

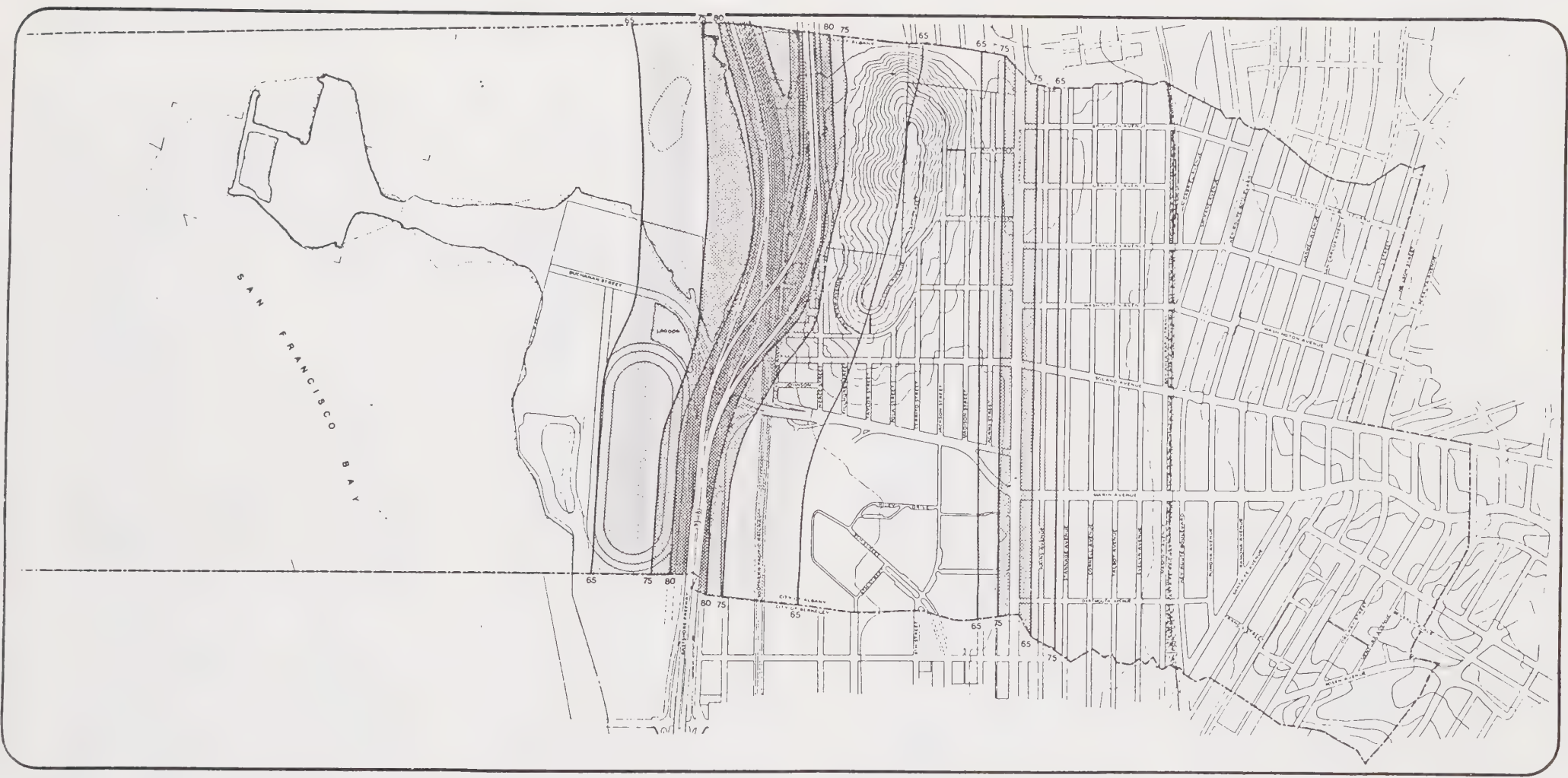
- Bikeway to Middle School site should be programmed for completion when the school is scheduled to open.
- Bikeway along Pierce Street should be programmed when street improvements are made in connection with the Gateview Apartments.
- A bicycle lane is recommended on the Buchanan Street Extension, providing access to the shoreline, when it is developed. Bicycle access now is made difficult by freeway-bound traffic crossing the railroad tracks, and the freeway entrance and exits. Section 105.5 of the California Streets and Highways Code states, "Upon request of a public agency . . . the department may enter into an agreement with such agency for the construction and maintenance of facilities for pedestrian, bicycle . . . traffic, which generally follow a State highway, where no other suitable facility for such traffic exists . . ."

D. TRANSPORTATION NOISE

State requirements regarding the Noise Element of the General Plan state that the City must identify present and projected noise levels for major transportation systems, and require that conclusions about route selection and compatible land use alternatives be made on the basis of noise impact. The projected noise levels for Albany from Route 17 and Route 80 are depicted in Map 6. Analysis of noise levels suggests the following policies:

POLICY 1: REDUCE THE EXPOSURE OF ALBANY RESIDENTS TO EXCESSIVE TRANSPORTATION-GENERATED NOISE WHENEVER THIS IS FEASIBLE FROM AN ECONOMIC AND ENGINEERING STANDPOINT.

a) Route 17 and the Route 17/80 interchange produce an unacceptably high noise level for residential use as far away as 1000 feet from the roadway. This would include some of the residences in Albany Village, several blocks of residences between Buchanan Street and Calhoun Street, and the entire west face of Albany Hill. Noise shielding of the interchange is virtually impossible due to the



MAP 6 HIGHWAY NOISE

CONTOURS OF PREDICTED NOISE LEVELS, 1995, IN
THE VICINITY OF INTERSTATE 80 AND STATE ROUTE 17

NOTE: THE NOISE CONTOURS ON THIS MAP ARE EXPRESSED IN L_{10} dB(A).
THEY DO NOT INCLUDE NOISE SOURCES OUTSIDE THE RIGHT-OF-
WAY NOR ATTENUATION DUE TO BUILDINGS AND BARRIERS. THE
CONTOURS ARE SUBJECT TO A RANGE OF ± 3 dB(A).

SOURCE: STATE OF CALIFORNIA, DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION,
DISTRICT 04, NOISE CONTOURS FOR CITY OF ALBANY, 1974.

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design of the existing configuration and the adjacent topography. In order for noise shielding to be effective it must be high enough to block the line of sight from the noise source to the recipient. A shield high enough to block the line of sight from Albany Hill would be totally infeasible from an economic and engineering standpoint. The interchange itself is a double curve, and shielding along the edge of the curve would present a hazard for motorists, whose sight distance would be dangerously reduced.

b) The noise generated by Southern Pacific Railroad operations is not as constant as that from Interstate 80 and Route 17, but constitutes a source of relatively loud volumes, compounded by the location of the tracks adjacent to the freeway and the amplification effect of Albany Hill. According to data supplied by Southern Pacific, approximately 26-29 trains per day pass through Albany, with 70 percent of these operations occurring during evening and nighttime hours (7 p.m. to 7 a.m.). From noise readings taken elsewhere,* it is reasonable to assign the following noise contours to Albany operations:

<u>Distance from Track</u>	<u>dBA</u>
100 feet	100-105
500 feet	90-95
1,000 feet	70-75

According to HUD guidelines,** unshielded residential sites within 600 feet of the tracks (based on the roughly 20 nighttime operations in Albany) are in the "normally unacceptable" category for noise exposure. Those areas most severely affected by railroad noise are the west portion of Albany Village and the neighborhood bounded by Washington, Buchanan, Pierce, and Cleveland Streets.

Much of the noise emanating from the Southern Pacific Railroad operations could feasibly be shielded since the tracks are situated at grade, and there is adequate space available to construct noise shielding. The railroad is not required to build shields, and it is highly unlikely that they would be willing to do so. However, the possibility of cooperative agreements with the Southern Pacific

* Wyle Laboratories Report WCR 73-5, Assessment of Noise Environments Around Railroad Operations, July 1973, pp. 3-18 through 3-20.

** U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Noise Assessment Guidelines, August 1971, pp. 14-15.

44 Railroad allowing the City of Albany and the University to install shields such as earth-mounds or walls within the right-of-way should be thoroughly examined, especially for the areas mentioned. Conditions of 100 dBA at the residences on Pierce Avenue clearly warrent attention.

Finally, landscaping such as the tree planting suggested in the Scenic Highway section, while providing little actual attenuation, would enhance the visual isolation, and so may reduce a person's awareness of noise to a greater extent.

c) BART trains in Albany have been recorded at up to 89 dBA 100 feet from the tracks. The highest recorded noise from BART trains at the North Berkeley Portal, slightly below grade with noise shields, was 76 dBA. This indicates that noise shielding along the entire route in Albany could significantly mitigate the effects of BART created noise.

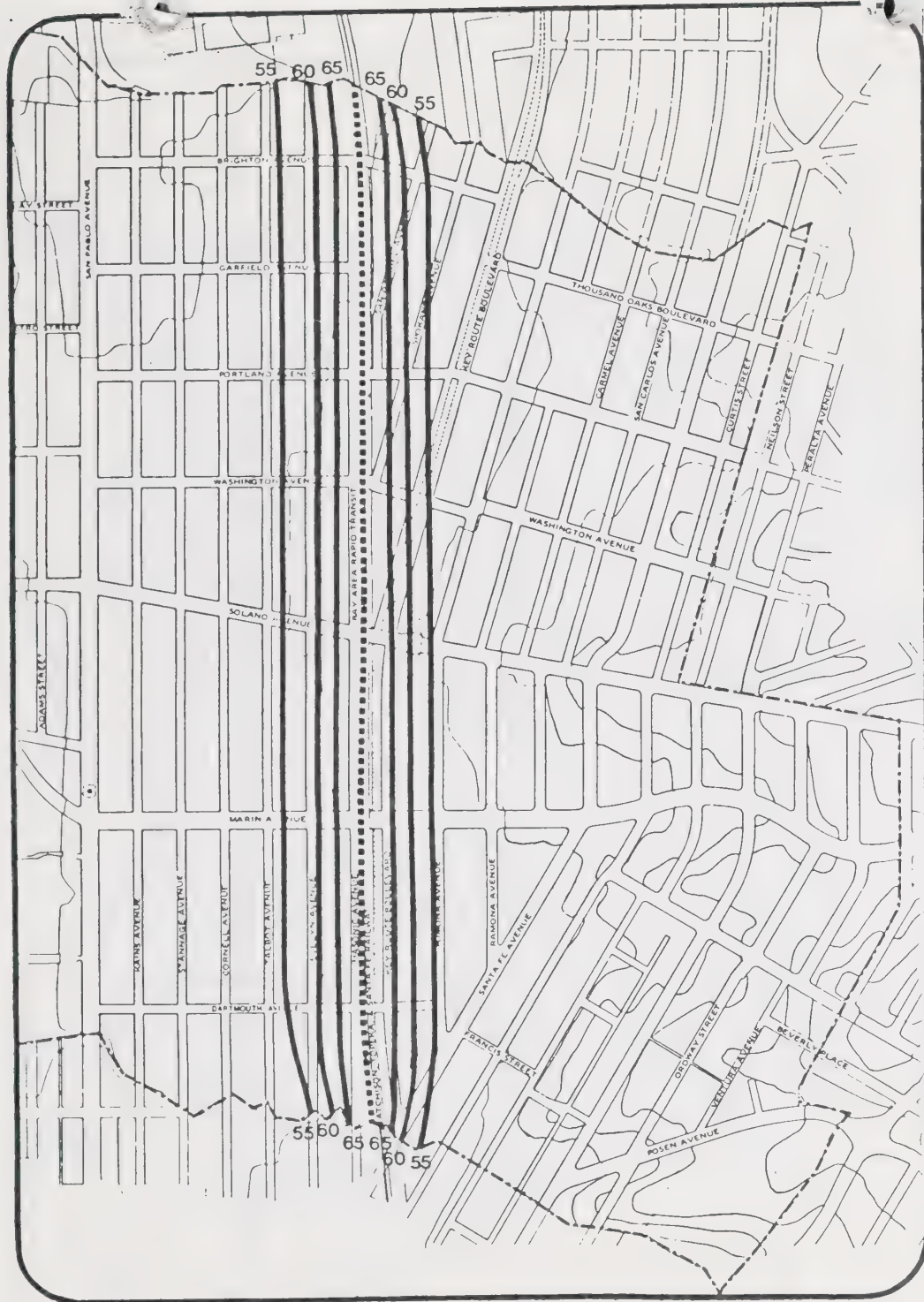
The City should continue to press the Rapid Transit District to provide noise shields on the tracks for the entire length of Albany.

d) San Pablo Avenue is largely commercial in use with several residential uses on the street. Although the noise contours indicate unacceptably high levels of noise for residential areas behind the commercial development, those contours are drawn without regard to the intermittent shielding effects of buildings acting as a partial buffer to noise.

POLICY 2: ENSURE THAT NEW DEVELOPMENT IN HIGH NOISE AREAS INCORPORATES ADEQUATE INSULATION TO ENSURE THE REDUCTION OF NOISE EXPOSURE FOR EXISTING RESIDENTS OF THE CITY AS WELL AS FUTURE OCCUPANTS.

a) Albany should consider adopting a noise control ordinance based either on the Model Noise Ordinance prepared by the League of California Cities (Revised January, 1973) or on the New York State Proposed Regulations for the Prevention and Control of Environmental Noise Pollution (N.Y. State Department of Environmental Conservation, Bureau of Noise Control, Albany, New York, 12201).

b) Albany should use the noise exposure standards promulgated by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for approval of new residential construction.



MAP 7

EXISTING RAPID TRANSIT NOISE

CONTOURS ARE EXPRESSED IN L_{DN} dB(A)

SOURCE: ACOUSTICS SURVEY CONDUCTED BY B.A.R.T.D. OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT, AUGUST 21, 1972.

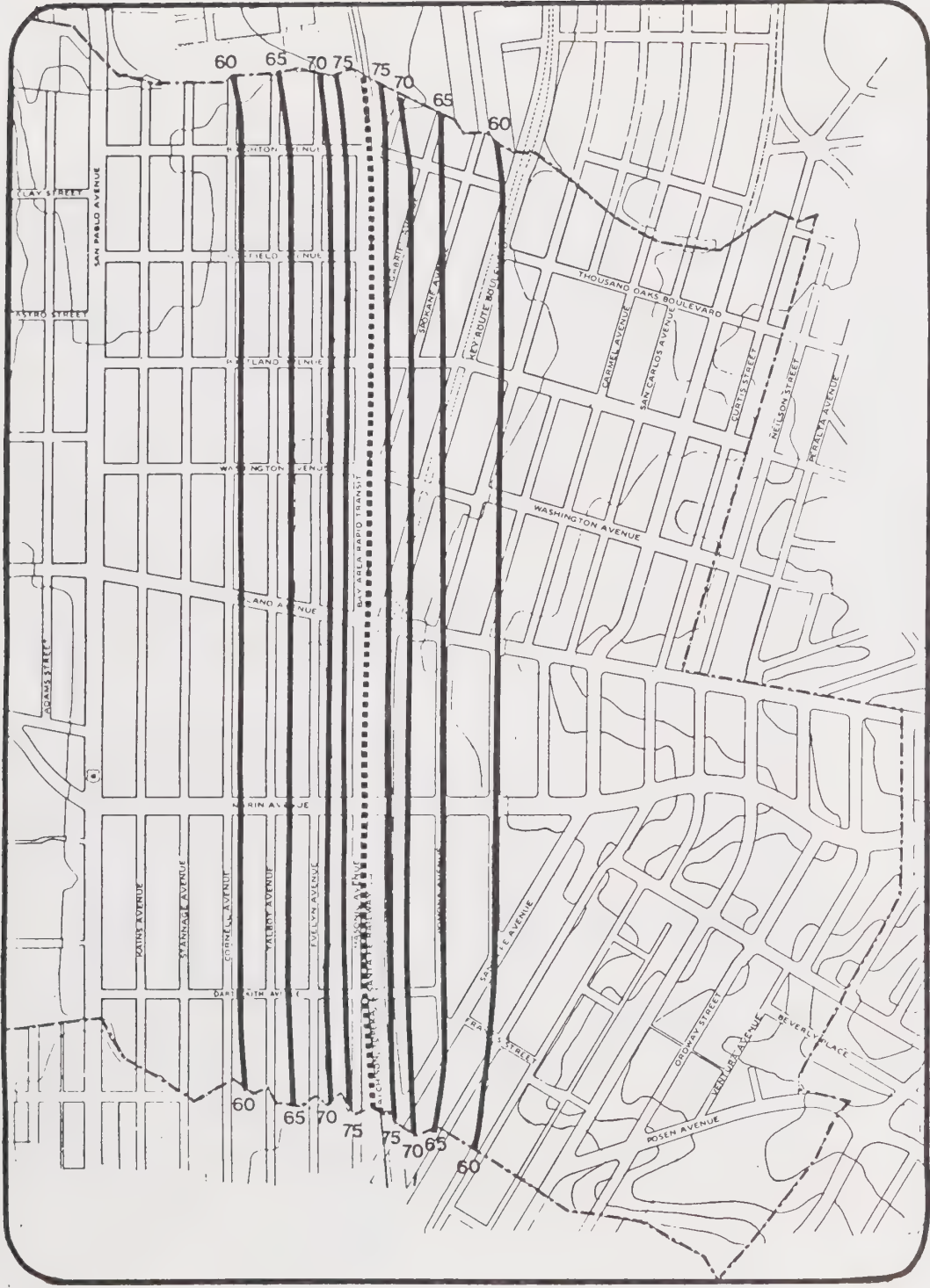
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MAP 8

PROJECTED RAPID TRANSIT NOISE, 1995

CONTOURS ARE EXPRESSED IN L_{DN} dB(A)

SOURCE: ACOUSTICS SURVEY CONDUCTED BY B. A. R. T. D.
OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT, AUGUST 21, 1972.

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c) Uniform Building Code Chapter 35, Sound Transmission Standards, should be used as the requirements for new multi-family residential construction in Albany.

V. THE COMMERCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Albany is primarily a residential community with only 2 percent of its land area developed in industrial use, and 16 percent developed in commercial uses. Given the pattern of development in the City, it is reasonable to assume that industrial uses will remain and be limited to the area in which they now exist, adjacent to the freeway. The Golden Gate Fields Raceway is a commercial recreation use, which is also assumed to remain at its present location during the planning period.

Commercial activity in Albany is concentrated on two major streets: Solano Avenue and San Pablo Avenue. Each street is discussed separately in the following sections.

A. SAN PABLO AVENUE

San Pablo Avenue, which carries an average daily traffic of between 23,000 and 27,000 vehicles,* is developed principally with automobile-oriented commercial uses, including automobile sales and service establishments, which tend to be located on the west side of the street, and eating and service establishments, located on the east side of the street. The street functions as a highway commercial strip, relying on customers from neighboring communities, as well as from Albany itself. The street currently does not function well as a thoroughfare, due to the deficient width of traffic lanes, and turns made from the center lanes. Visually the street lacks attractiveness, distinction, or identity, and this is to a large extent due to its former role as U.S. Highway 40.

The General Plan recognizes the two-fold role of San Pablo Avenue as a major thoroughfare and as a commercial strip oriented primarily to serving the automobile and its occupants. The following factors were considered in assessing

* State of California, Department of Transportation: 1972 Traffic Volumes on California State Highways, 1972.

50 the future commercial role of San Pablo Avenue:

1. The population of Albany will remain fairly stable, except for the increase in population resulting from the completion of the Gateview Apartments on the west side of Albany Hill. This development should contain commercial facilities serving the Gateview residents.
2. Any increase in general commercial development will occur on Solano Avenue.
3. San Pablo Avenue will continue to attract customers from adjacent communities for specialized (especially auto-oriented) commercial uses.
4. The established automobile dealers will form a nucleus of commercial uses and will continue to sustain Albany's economic base.

POLICY 1: REINFORCE THE EXISTING COMMERCIAL CHARACTER OF SAN PABLO AVENUE.

Encourage the retention of auto-related uses such as automobile sales, parts and services, and other businesses relying upon community and regional through-traffic, and encourage new heavy commercial and light industrial uses to locate on San Pablo Avenue, which uses, at the discretion of the City Planning and Zoning Commission and the City Council, may include:

- printing, publishing, and allied industries;
- assemblage of professional, scientific, and controlling instruments;
- furniture, appliance, and lumber sales;
- the manufacture of electronic components and accessories;
- food products manufacture;
- miscellaneous custom and light (non-fabricating) manufacture;

□ general storage, wholesaling, and transport facilities.

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Such uses should be enclosed. Parking and storage areas should be landscaped to screen them from view of adjacent residences and along the rear lot line.

POLICY 2: STIMULATE THE EXPANSION OF EXISTING LARGE BUSINESSES AND THE RECEPTION OF NEW INDUSTRIAL USES BY URGING THE CONSOLIDATION OF PARCELS AND THE INFILLING OF marginally used vacant space fronting SAN PABLO AVENUE.

POLICY 3: RECOGNIZE THE INADEQUATE DEPTH OF LOTS FRONTING ON SAN PABLO.

Allow the possible expansion of commercial uses to Kains and Adams Streets, but only as a selective accommodation to business (e.g. consolidated parking facilities) and not as a goal in itself. The commercial expansion district would allow businesses fronting on San Pablo Avenue to obtain space behind the rear portion of the lot for additional development, and offers the potential for the development of larger new uses. The expansion should only occur from parcels fronting on San Pablo Avenue, and all rear lot development should provide screening and landscaping for adjacent residential uses.

The blocks fronting on San Pablo Avenue were analyzed according to existing commercial development, existing expansion into rear parcels fronting on either Adams Street or Kains Street, the potential for additional development or expansion, as well as the character of the rear portion of the blocks fronting either on Adams or Kains, and the desirability of new development to replace older structures. This analysis was used to designate the commercial expansion areas indicated on the General Plan map, Map 9.

POLICY 4: PROTECT ADJACENT RESIDENTIAL AREAS FROM ANY NEGATIVE ASPECTS OF THE COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT.

a) Automobile access to the commercial or other uses fronting on San Pablo Avenue should be provided from the east-west side streets as much as possible. Vehicular access from either Adams Street or Kains Street should be minimized due to the narrow width and residential character of these streets.

b) All non-commercial, light industrial uses should be completely enclosed by a structure.

c) Any non-residential use adjacent to a residential structure should provide screening of parking areas and buildings to consist either of landscaping of sufficient height to screen the use from view of residential structures or fencing with landscaping.

d) Residential uses should be permitted in upper floors in suitable areas on San Pablo Avenue as long as they are protected from any negative aspects of adjacent commercial development.

POLICY 5: IMPROVE THE APPEARANCE OF SAN PABLO AVENUE AS WELL AS VEHICULAR FLOW AND SAFETY TO ENHANCE THE AUTO-ORIENTATION OF THE COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT.

a) Encourage the planting of trees and shrubs in any open space within the right-of-way;

b) Enforce controls on large protruding signs, and encourage additional setback requirements to foster an awareness of open space in the right-of-way corridor;

c) Develop and maintain shelters and other street furniture at the bus stops, where vehicular and pedestrian traffic interface.

B. SOLANO AVENUE

POLICY 1: NEW DEVELOPMENT ON SOLANO AVENUE EAST OF ADAMS STREET SHOULD REINFORCE THE LOCAL, GENERAL COMMERCIAL CHARACTER OF THE STREET.

Solano Avenue is developed with general commercial uses, services, professional offices, and residential uses. Conveniently located for access from residential development in Albany, the street beautification program completed by the City was designed to make the street more attractive for commercial development. This street will continue to serve as a neighborhood and community-oriented shopping area, perhaps drawing some patronage from nearby Berkeley residential areas.

Future development should include General Commercial uses oriented toward neighborhood shopping, services and professional offices. Retail uses would include food and related establishments, dry goods, home furnishings, and goods of a similar nature. Services include business services such as insurance and real estate offices, or personal services such as beauty shops. Professional uses would

include medical, dental, and legal uses, as well as other professional services.

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The ground floor of all new developments along Solano Avenue east of San Pablo should be required to be occupied by the above General Commercial uses. Upper floors could also be occupied by General Commercial uses, and, in addition, east of Kains Street, residential uses would also be permitted in the upper floors.

C. PROFESSIONAL OFFICES

POLICY 1: NEW OFFICE DEVELOPMENT OUTSIDE COMMERCIAL AREAS SHOULD BE ADJACENT TO EXISTING COMMERCIAL OR OFFICE DEVELOPMENT.

There are two areas in the City that have been previously designated for office development by application of the "P" (Professional Office Combining District) zone, which allows professional offices by use permit. The two areas are the area north of Brighton Avenue adjacent to El Cerrito Plaza, and the north side of Marin Avenue, between Talbot Avenue and Evelyn Avenue, adjacent to Albany Hospital.

The "P" zoning north of Brighton Avenue should be limited to an area 75 feet from the northern City limits. This will ensure proximity to the El Cerrito Plaza parking lot and minimize problems of access, parking, traffic congestion and possible incompatibility with nearby residential uses. In reviewing use permits for professional offices in this area, the Planning & Zoning Commission should ensure that access to the Plaza is available, in addition to adequate off-street parking.

The "P" zoning on Marin Avenue should be restricted to its present extent. It is appropriate to keep the zoning, recognizing the existing office uses. However, it would be inappropriate to extend the zoning to a greater area since the hospital is now a satellite rehabilitation center for Alta Bates in Berkeley.

VI. THE PLANNING PROCESS

The adoption of the General Plan is but one step in an ongoing community planning process. The Plan, as an adopted document, is designed to accomplish several purposes:

1. It complies with the requirements of the State of California Government Code by containing the mandatory plan elements, and serves as a guideline for the revision of the Zoning Ordinance if policies in the Plan indicate that such a change would be necessary to achieve consistency between the Zoning Ordinance and the General Plan.
2. It clarifies and articulates public policy and the intentions of the City Council with respect to the future development of the City.
3. It serves as a means of informing residents, other public agencies and prospective investors of the long-range and short-range goals, policies and development standards of the community.
4. It establishes a basis for coordination, understanding and negotiation among public agencies who have responsibility within the Albany city limits.

A. PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

In order to carry out the programs recommended in the Plan, the City Council should establish a planning function in the City offices, under the jurisdiction of the Administrative Officer. This function would include the appointment of a Staff Representative with specific duties, including the establishment and administration of a design review process, and the institution of the Capital Improvements Program.

The Staff Representative should have had a planning and design education and public administration experience, and possess a familiarity with Federal and State programs and grant application requirements and procedures. This person would act in an advisory capacity to the Planning and Zoning Commission and to the City Council; as well as performing the following functions:

Prepare the necessary ordinances and zoning amendments, and carry out the recommendations of the General Plan.

Be responsible for the Housing Maintenance Program recommended to improve the quality of the housing stock. The Staff Representative would work in coordination with the Building Inspector in development records on structures and a program to inspect housing in the treatment areas designated in the General Plan. The Staff Representative would be responsible for investigating the feasibility of and developing a revolving loan fund with City input, as well as for investigating private sources of home improvement loans. The person selected for the position would set up a record system that would include not only code enforcement, but also investigation of the potential for structural hazards noted under the seismic safety portion of the General Plan.

- Consult and advise on ways of carrying out the General Plan.
- Promote public interest in and understanding of the General Plan and the regulations based upon its policies and recommendations.
- Submit an annual report to the Planning Commission and City Council on the status and application of the General Plan.
- Coordinate with Federal, State, and regional agencies with regard to planning matters including Environmental Protection Agency, ABAG, BCDC, and the Air Quality Control Board.
- Provide technical assistance to the Planning and Zoning Commission in reviewing specific proposals for development as regards conformity with the General Plan, Zoning Ordinance and all applicable codes. This assistance would be in the form of an analysis of new developments, to be

spelled out in greater detail in the description of a Design Review process to follow.

- Develop and maintain in coordination with the Administrative Officer, City Engineer and heads of city departments a Capital Improvement Program that will set priorities for public improvements in accordance with the recommendations of the General Plan.

B. DESIGN REVIEW PROCESS

The City's Design review/^{process} should include the submission of the necessary site plan showing location of all structures and uses, including off-street parking and loading spaces, architectural plans showing all elevations of proposed structures as they will appear upon completion, and landscape plans in all districts. The review shall consider the standards designated in Zoning Ordinance as well as the following criteria:

- Identify natural hazards: Special studies should be required of sites located in areas outlined in Map 3, Seismic and Geologic Hazards Susceptibility Areas. Studies should define the extent of hazard, and proposals for mitigation. The review committee should decide if mitigation measures meet standards required by City codes and are sufficient to protect life and property.
- Identify areas of natural resource protection: Relates to areas identified in Map 2, Open Space and Conservation. Insure that development conforms to standards set for protection of such areas. Plans should be responsive to the goal of preserving the environment.

- Identify areas of special concern: These are indicated in Map 6, Highway Noise and the Plan text related to scenic highways. Development in areas of concern indicated should provide adequate shielding from noise for occupants of new development. Development should conform to policies expressed regarding scenic highways.
- Residential development: Design of buildings should conform to all restrictions of the Zoning Ordinance. Design of structures should be compatible with scale and character of existing development. Structures should be designed to provide attractive facade and landscaping at the pedestrian level.
- Commercial development: Uses and structures should be designed to encourage pedestrian use on Solano Avenue. Detail at the pedestrian scale increases visual interest. When located adjacent to residential uses, screening should shield residential uses from traffic and noise generated by commercial uses. Commercial development on San Pablo Avenue should be designed to enhance the auto-oriented commercial character of the street. The rear portion of commercial properties should be screened from view by landscaping and fencing from residential areas.
- Economic: Evaluate the effect of development on the need for increased public expenditures, public facilities and/or services. The studies conducted should indicate how the proposed development will affect the economic development in the City, whether proposed development will improve the vitality of commercial areas, or lead to the deterioration of such centers, and whether it will provide employment opportunities for residents, without discrimination.
- Social: It is difficult within the scope of design review to monitor the social effects of development. The choices made in developing the General Plan policies embody choices in social values, such as the decision to maintain the existing single-family housing stock, and the desire to maintain the quality of the residential environment. Goals which appear desirable for the community include insuring non-discrimination with respect to age, race, color, creed or sex. The use of the ABAG model for housing subsidy allocation is one attempt to deal with social issues.

C. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

The City should develop a Capital Improvements Program (CIP) which implements the recommendations of the General Plan, as well as establishing City priorities for improvement programming.

- ▣ The CIP should incorporate all significant improvements for a five year period, and enable the City Council to program items according to their priority.
- ▣ The Program would be developed
in coordination with the heads of
the various departments responsible for the proposed public works.
- ▣ The Program should include specific improvements of recreation facilities, undergrounding of utilities, street improvements and improvement of waste-water collection facilities. The improvements should be tied to appropriate funding sources, such as Gas Tax revenues, General Revenue Sharing funds, etc.
- ▣ Priorities for funding should be determined by consideration of the following factors: the necessity of the project to eliminate a hazard to life and limb, the possibility of conservation of existing property and resources, and the availability of specific monies to carry out a particular project.
- ▣ Improvements should be ranked according to priority, with the highest priority funded in the first year of the program, and subsequent high priority items funded in the following years of the program.
- ▣ The CIP should be used to evaluate the distribution and location of improvements, and to consider the cumulative effect of public investment in various areas of the City, and to determine the most equitable and effective allocation of scarce resources.



MAP A: GENERAL PLAN REVISIONS

RESIDENTIAL

- 1 Low Density
- 2 PUD Permit Expires Nov.1982

ALBANY HILL AREA SPECIFIC PLAN

- 3 12 Dwelling Units/Net Acre
- 4 18 Dwelling Units/Net Acre

WATERFRONT MASTER PLAN

COMMERCIAL

- 5 General
- 6 Highway
- 7 Highway/Expansion
- Recreation



CITY OF ALBANY, CALIFORNIA



1980



MAP 9

GENERAL PLAN

RESIDENTIAL (DWELLING UNITS PER NET ACRE)	
	LOW DENSITY (APPROX. 12 MAX.)
	MODERATE DENSITY (APPROX. 35 MAX.)
	HIGH DENSITY (APPROX. 70 MAX.)
	RESIDENTIAL TOWERS (210 MAX.)

COMMERCIAL	
	GENERAL
	HIGHWAY
	EXPANSION
	RECREATION

INSTITUTIONAL	
	SCHOOL
	CIVIC CENTER
	OTHER
	ALBANY ISLES PLAN

	INDUSTRIAL
	RESEARCH
	OPEN SPACE
	PARKS & REC.
	CONSERVATION

CIRCULATION	
	COLLECTOR
	MINOR ARTERIAL
	TYPE IV NON FWY.
	FREEWAY

CITY OF
ALBANY,
CALIFORNIA

500 0 500 1000 FEET

GENERAL
PLAN REVISION
PROGRAM
1973-75
(Rev. 1980)

DUNCAN & JONES

ALBANY HILL AREA SPECIFIC PLAN

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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

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PROPOSED REVISION OF ZONING ORDINANCE TO
CREATE HILLSIDE DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

Adopted by the Albany City Council
January 23, 1978

I. INTRODUCTION

Albany Hill is an important visual feature of the East Bay shoreline, and the most significant natural feature within the City of Albany. It provides a scenic, natural backdrop to the highly urbanized flatlands surrounding it on all sides. On the hill itself, the woodland surroundings and excellent views provide an area of relief from the urban environment.

The hill is characterized by steep slopes with a gently rounded summit. The highest elevation is approximately 338 feet. Vegetation consists of eucalyptus woodland, (the trees were planted in the 1890's), grassland which includes many native grasses and wildflowers, and on the northern slope of the hill a fine example of live oak woodland. The excellent habitat provided by these areas and the adjacent creek-side vegetation of Cerrito Creek supports a rich variety of animal species. Geologically, the hill is composed of Franciscan sandstone, a hard rock which generally provides excellent foundation material for building. However, several landslide areas have been identified on the northern slope of the hill.

BACKGROUND OF THE PRESENT STUDY

In 1975, the Albany City Council adopted a new General Plan for the City. Among other things, the plan sets forth policies for the protection of the natural environment that remains in the City, and for the orderly development of currently undeveloped areas. In July, 1976, the City Council authorized a more detailed study of the undeveloped portions of Albany Hill in an effort to analyze the General Plan's policies and explore means of implementing them on remaining Albany Hill open space lands. A five-member citizen Land Use Committee was formed and after months of extensive effort, the Committee produced the Albany Hill Special Area Plan report. This report was submitted to the Planning Commission and City Council. The Council referred the plan back to the Planning Commission and assigned it the task of determining the best method of evaluating and implementing the proposals contained in the Special Area Plan. This Specific Plan is based, in large part, on the work contained in the previous Albany Hill Special Area Plan.

The Planning Commission formed an Ad Hoc Committee* to develop a Specific Plan for the subject area, (see Map A). The study area was delineated to include the area presently within the Hillside Control (HC) Zoning District, along with a small area of adjacent undeveloped land on the west side of Madison Street. The northwest portion of the hill, owned by Interstate General Corporation, was not included in the study area since a Use Permit for this entire area has already been approved. During the course of the present Specific Plan study, a public meeting was held on September 28, 1977 to gather citizen input concerning the way in which future development on the hill should be carried out.

*The Ad Hoc Committee was composed of representatives of the Planning Commission, Land Use Committee, Parks and Recreation Commission, Parks and Recreation Department, Traffic and Safety Commission, and the Public Works Department.



WHY A SPECIFIC PLAN?

The decision to prepare a Specific Plan was made mainly because of its status as an official document authorized by State law. A Specific Plan, as defined in Section 65451 of the California Government Code, shall include all detailed regulations, conditions, programs and proposed legislation which shall be necessary or convenient for the systematic implementation of each element of the General Plan, including but not limited to the following:

- (a) The location of housing, together with regulations establishing height, bulk, and setback limits for such buildings.
- (b) The location and extent of existing or proposed streets and roads.
- (c) Standards for population density and building density, including lot size.
- (d) Standards for the conservation, development, and utilization of natural resources.
- (e) The implementation of all applicable provisions of the General Plan's open space element.
- (f) Such other measures as may be necessary or convenient to insure the execution of the General Plan.

Specific Plans can allow local governing bodies to substantially enhance their control over most land use conditions. Reliance on Specific Plans can supplement traditional zoning ordinance provisions with detailed policies, regulations, development criteria, standards, designs, maps, etc. The main point is that Specific Plans can serve as a means of demonstrating in advance to potential developers the specific conditions to be met prior to submission of tentative subdivision maps, or development applications and prior to issuance of building or other permits. The local governing body can place itself in the position of pre-determining what is acceptable rather than only reacting to development proposals. For example, the State Subdivision Map Act states that tentative and final subdivision maps shall not be approved unless the governing body finds that the proposed subdivision is consistent with applicable General and Specific Plans.

OBJECTIVES OF THE ALBANY HILL AREA SPECIFIC PLAN

The objective of the Albany Hill Area Specific Plan is not to prevent further development on the hill, but rather to assure evaluation of certain factors prior to development approval. These factors include the location of existing City-owned parkland on the hill, the safety and aesthetic problems always associated with any hillside development, and the existence of the hill as Albany's main

physical feature. Therefore, the objectives of the Albany Hill Area Specific Plan are as follows:

- (a) To guide development and to insure that each proposal for development is compatible with the neighborhood, including potential future projects; consistent with carrying capacity of utilities, traffic, parking, and schools;
- (b) To recognize impacts of development on the existing City parklands, and recommend actions to minimize these impacts;
- (c) To protect natural resources;
- (d) To insure that all future development preserves the essential character, natural beauty, and form of Albany Hill;
- (e) To encourage a more diverse housing mix and innovative design, especially through the Planned Unit Development process with emphasis on securing optimum usable open space;
- (f) To allow maximum flexibility of design by requiring an early preliminary design review process.

STUDY APPROACH

The approach followed in developing this Specific Plan was as follows:

- (a) The existing conditions in the study area were documented.
- (b) An evaluation was made concerning the population level which could reasonably be supported in the area, based both on the ability to provide public services (schools, water, sewer, traffic, etc.) as well as the physical conditions such as topography and geology of the hill.
- (c) Based on this analysis, figures were developed concerning the reasonable overall density and magnitude of development which should be permitted on the hill, especially as compared to the existing densities allowed by the General Plan.

There are two basic approaches to regulating development in hill-side areas. The first approach entails the establishment of very specific and detailed standards concerning density, percentage of lot coverage, building height, etc., often related to degree of slope and other physical factors. The second approach establishes general principles to be used in the review of development applications. This Specific Plan represents a combination of the two approaches with the emphasis being placed on the establishment of general principles to be used in a combined Use Permit (or Planned Unit Development)/Design Review process.

II. EXISTING CONDITIONS

LAND USE

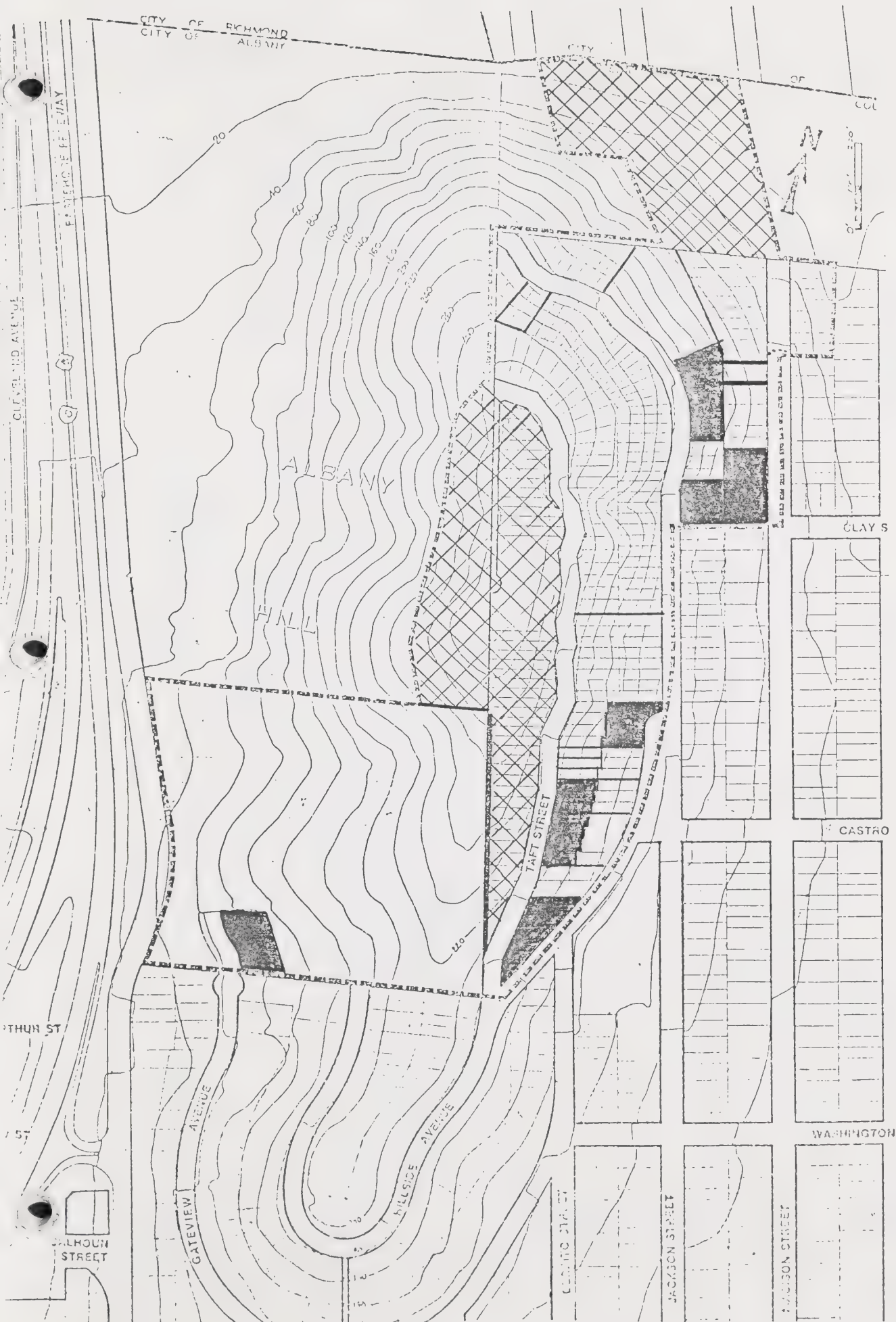
Over the years, several plans have come forward for major developments on Albany Hill. Most of these involved either massive removal of portions of the hill, or large-scale, high-density development. These plans were either rejected or failed of their own accord. Instead, small-scale apartment developments have occurred on the hill from time to time, and in this fashion residential development has proceeded. In 1972, however, a major proposal was approved which will have profound effect on the hill, as well as on the City as a whole. This development, located adjacent to and northwest of the study area, called for high-density residential towers concentrated on the western third of the property, at the base of the hill. In approving the Gateview project, land use decisions regarding approximately forty acres of land on Albany Hill were made. Of these, about twenty-eight acres would remain as permanent open space. In addition, the developer acquired lands on the top of Albany Hill, and dedicated these and other lands, totaling almost ten acres, to the City for use as parks.

The majority of the Specific Plan study area is undeveloped. Map B indicates those areas which are developed or presently undergoing development as well as the two unimproved City parks. Within the study area on the east side of the hill, there are approximately nine acres of privately owned vacant land. On the west side of the hill there is one large parcel of undeveloped land consisting of approximately eleven acres. Within the Specific Plan area there are currently three single-family homes, two duplexes, six three or four-plexes and one thirteen-unit apartment building. Construction of a ten-unit townhouse complex is currently underway.

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

The remaining natural vegetation on Albany Hill is of high quality, and of scientific interest, (see Map C). Many native grasses, which have largely disappeared from coastal California, are found on the hill. Some sixty-five species of native plants are known to occur on Albany Hill. The numerous species which provide favored foods, plus the abundant cover available, is responsible for a richness of animal life. Approximately one hundred species of vertebrates may be expected to occur on the hill at some time during the year.






The oak woodland on the north slope of the hill has been found to be of scientific value. A 1969 study of the oak woodland revealed that the absence of deer has, over the last fifty years, allowed the establishment of many oak seedlings, so that the population includes many individuals of all ages. This condition was not found in other oak woodlands studied in the regional park and watershed lands in the Berkeley Hills. Thus, the Albany Hill oak woodland stands as a unique example of its type, which has been able to develop free from pressure of herbivores. In that study, the oldest trees on the hill were found to be over 200 years old. In addition, the richness of the



MAP B - EXISTING LAND USE



MAP C VEGETATION

-  Eucalyptus Forest
-  Oak Forest*
-  Grassland
-  Native Grass Stands
-  Developed Area

*Includes willow grove area adjacent to Blind Orientation Center

plant and animal life within this oak woodland area, and the feeling of separation which the dense tree cover provides, can be seen as an important amenity to the adjacent Creekside Park's educational and recreational potential.

The sandstone bedrock of the hill was found to be an excellent foundation material, generally free of the instability problems which affect other rock types occurring in neighboring communities. Several historic landslides, however, are known on the north slope of the hill (three were identified in the course of this study; these have resulted in locally steep slopes). They may also be areas of continued instability, (see Map D).

The average percent slope (the vertical distance as a percentage of the horizontal distance) on the east side of the hill appears to be almost 50% in the undeveloped area between Madison and Jackson Streets, and well over 50% between Jackson and Taft Streets. The average percent slope on the western side of the hill within the study area appears to be almost 30%. Many suburban cities prevent all development, or permit only very low density development, in areas which exceed 30% or 35% slope. As slope increases, so does the potential for environmental degradation, including slope failure and increased erosion, sedimentation, and runoff. Also, aesthetic values are maintained if development is encouraged in gently sloping areas while keeping steeply sloped, dominant landscapes in their natural state. However, it is apparent that development can and has occurred on Albany Hill's steep slopes, and Albany is probably willing to continue to allow development in extremely steep areas, as occurs in San Francisco and its East Bay neighbors. Nevertheless, the steepness of these slopes brings into question the appropriateness of the current rather high density designations in the Albany General Plan and Zoning Ordinance.

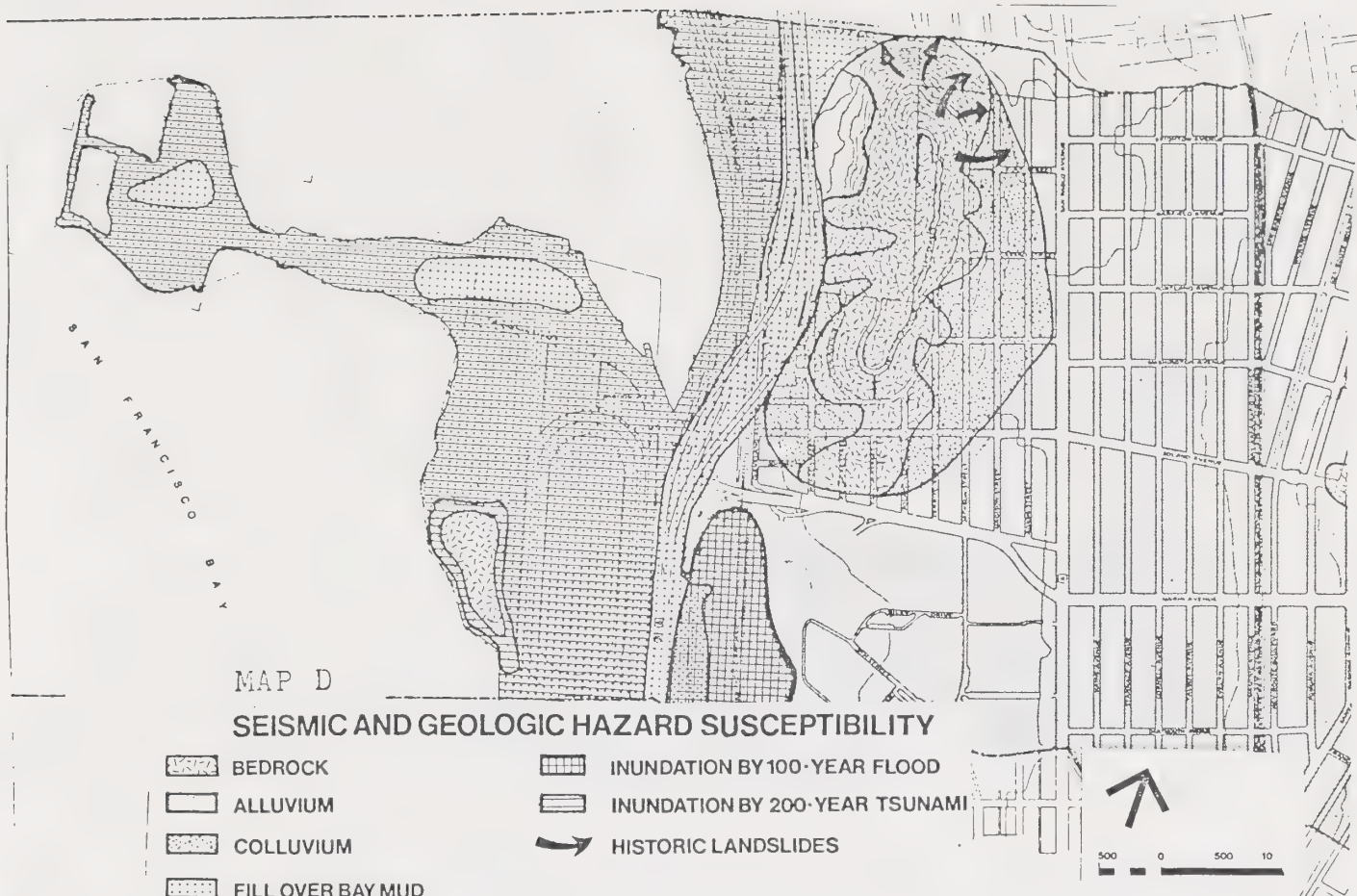
EXISTING PLANS AND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS

The Albany General Plan Map, (see Map E), designates the eastern portion of the Specific Plan area as Moderate Density Residential* allowing 35 dwelling units per net acre.** The existing Zoning Ordinance is not in conformance with the General Plan since this area is zoned R-3, which would permit significantly higher densities. However, the Zoning Ordinance must be brought into conformity with the General Plan, and also with this Specific Plan once it is adopted. One of the major aspects of this Specific Plan is its recommendations for amending the Zoning Ordinance.

The General Plan designates the western portion of the hill, in the Specific Plan area, as Low Density Residential, allowing approximately 12 dwelling units per net acre. This portion of the hill is currently zoned R-1, which is consistent with the General Plan's Low Density designation.

*Except for the eastern side of the currently improved portion of Madison Street, north of Clay Street, which is designated as Low Density Residential.

**Net acres exclude streets and other publicly-owned areas.



The entire area chosen for the Specific Plan is currently subject to the Zoning Ordinance's Hillside Control (HC) combining district. A Use Permit is required for any development in the HC district, which entails a public hearing, at which time the suitability of the proposal under the General Plan and Design Review Ordinance is considered. In granting a Use Permit, the granting agency, (Planning Commission or City Council), may impose restrictions or conditions.*

Using the General Plan Map density figure of 35 dwelling units per net acre, approximately 315 dwelling units could theoretically be constructed on the eastern side of the hill. However, off-street parking requirements and physical site constraints make this theoretical density unrealistic in most cases.

Using the General Plan density figure of 12 dwelling units per acre, approximately 132 units could theoretically be developed on the 11-acre parcel on the western side of the hill. A reasonable portion of this parcel can be required to be dedicated to the City as a condition for development approval; the General Plan indicates a portion of the site as Open Space Conservation.** Also, additional private open space can be achieved where appropriate by allowing greater density development on other portions of the site; this seems appropriate for this property.

Using the above figures, the maximum total number of units permitted under General Plan densities in the entire Specific Plan area would be approximately 450.

PUBLIC SERVICES AND FACILITIES

During the preparation of this Specific Plan, an effort was made to investigate the capability of various public services and facilities in the area to handle increased development. Theoretically, very large-scale development could be accommodated on the hill, but this would tax the present facility and service systems, and the level or quality of service would diminish. For example, the "capacities" of the streets in the area allow them to handle a great volume of traffic on a purely vehicle-per-day basis; but the resulting level or quality of service would not be very high, (that is, there would be more traffic congestion and it would take longer to get from or to the hill). Also, the impacts on the residential neighborhood would be undesirable. The four major public services investigated were water, sewer, schools and traffic.

* An inconsistent aspect of the General Plan is the statement that within the HC district the allowable densities should be determined by the Use Permit process. Nevertheless, the General Plan Map does assign the eastern portion of the study area with the 35 dwelling unit per net acre designation.

**While the General Plan states that development should be prohibited in the area 200 feet west of the ridgeline to preserve the view from the top of the hill, the General Plan Map seems to indicate a slightly different configuration in this Open Space Conservation area.

Water. The capacity of the existing water system is not a constraint on development. Water mains are located under the streets and the capacity, even at the top of the hill, is adequate for fire service. The standards for fire service greatly exceed those for domestic service. Therefore, any foreseeable level of residential use could be accommodated.

Sewers. The wastewater collection system also does not present any obstacles to development. A 1972 report for the City by engineering consultants states that the collection system is adequate to handle development in the area. However, some problems are likely to occur during wet weather since the existing older pipelines allow considerable water infiltration. To reduce these problems, Albany has an on-going program to improve this collection system, mainly through the sealing of leaky pipe joints and elimination of illegal rainwater connections.

Schools. Albany schools, although adequate for the moment, have less than five percent reserve capacity, which translates to spaces for approximately 100 students. Student ratio per household ranges from 0.33 citywide to 0.06 for the Gateview towers. Assuming the larger ratio, 300 additional dwelling units in the Specific Plan area could result in 100 more pupils which would fill all existing vacancies, although the actual pupil/dwelling unit ratio in the hill area might be less than for the City as a whole. This projection from the school administrators does not take into consideration the additional school population projected for Gateview. At full development, Gateview is expected to generate over 100 students. While it might seem appropriate to perhaps scale down the total number of dwelling units permitted in the Specific Plan area to a number which would represent a more reasonable demand on school services, the School District Administration indicates that it is able to handle any foreseeable development on Albany Hill.

Traffic. Traffic capacity on a road is related to the width of the traveled roadway. The streets within the Specific Plan area are of adequate width to accommodate the maximum possible daily traffic. However, the problem comes in conflicts that arise at the many acute intersections on the hill. Many of these are on a steep slope and have restricted visibility. The constrictions at these intersections reduce the overall traffic capacity in the hill area but such reduction cannot be measured in absolute terms.

The effect of additional housing units on the hill and the resulting additional traffic burden is best measured by the resulting reduction in what is known as the level of service. That is, as traffic increases, there will be additional conflicts at the intersections, a proportional increase in traffic accidents, possibly greater delays at intersections, and other aspects which tend to reduce the ease of traveling from one point to another.

There is the additional factor, which is not at all related to the level of service or other traffic engineering matters, which is the impact that additional traffic will have on the quality of life in the neighborhood. Specifically, this refers to the increased noise and pollution imposed on individual residents by increased traffic passing on an adjacent street.

In order to reduce the negative effect of additional traffic on the local streets, the City will have to evaluate in the future various policies as the need arises. For instance, should parking be eliminated on one side of the street? Should one-way streets be reconsidered as a means of improving the traffic flow through intersections? The latter question may become an increasingly more reasonable alternative as traffic on the hill increases. Requiring 1½:1 parking for all units in the area will reduce the need for parking on the street but will have the alternative effect of encouraging a larger number of vehicles to be owned by the residents. It may be also desirable at a later time to restrict additional parking at intersections in order to ease the conflicts.

It should be noted that the City, on at least two occasions in the past, evaluated and rejected requests of residents for certain one-way streets in the Specific Plan Area and immediately adjacent to it.

In conjunction with the current construction of a 10-unit condominium project at the corner of Hillside and Taft, and the construction by the developer of street improvements, improvements will be made to the intersections of Hillside Avenue at Taft and Cerrito by channelizing the approach traffic and by the placement of stop signs.

This department is currently undertaking traffic counts at all locations in order to determine the amount of locally generated traffic and the amount of traffic resulting from trips to Overlook Park at the end of Taft and Jackson Streets. These figures will be used to project more accurately expected traffic generation from future units on the hill. In the absence of this documentation, the figure of 6.8 vehicle trips per day per residence can be used, a number which was supplied from the Institute of Traffic Studies.

Additional relief to local streets can be achieved by encouraging proper design of the larger developments yet to be built on the hill. For instance, on the large four-acre parcel lying between Jackson and Taft, known as the Fortier property, it seems more appropriate to encourage as much traffic as is possible to exit onto Jackson Street.

III. ALBANY HILL AREA SPECIFIC PLAN

The major provisions included in this section are as follows:

- (1) A unified Hillside development review process (implemented by adoption of this Specific Plan).
- (2) A Specific Plan map indicating areas available for development and their appropriate development densities (implemented by the adoption of this Specific Plan and an amendment to the General Plan).
- (3) Specific policies to be followed in regulating development in the Specific Plan area (implemented by adoption of this Specific Plan).
- (4) Hillside Design Review Guidelines and Development Principles (implemented by amending the existing Zoning Ordinance Design Review Guidelines).
- (5) A proposed Hillside Development District (implemented as an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance).

HILLSIDE DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESS

The Albany Hill Area Specific Plan's basic overall provision is that a unified Hillside Development Review Process be established. This process contains the following features:

- (1)a. A pre-application conference shall be held between the applicant and City staff. This requires the early submittal of preliminary plans and development concepts. The City staff shall inform the applicant of relevant City plans and policies concerning development on Albany Hill. These include the Albany General Plan, this Albany Hill Area Specific Plan, and the Zoning Ordinance which includes the proposed new Hillside Development District, Planned Unit Development Procedures, and Design Review Procedures.
- b. For all Planned Unit Developments, cluster housing and any proposal which may require grading, access streets, removal of trees over five feet in height, the plans and development concepts shall be referred to the Planning Commission for early preliminary design review.
- (2) The proposed Hillside Development District is not an overlay district but rather replaces both the HC District and any existing underlying District, (see Appendix).
- (3) Prior to development approval, the applicant should submit sufficient data to allow adequate review according to the Design Review Guidelines and Development Principles contained in this report. Such information should include: field surveys, topographic maps, location of trees over five feet

in height, existing drainage and drainage plans, grading plans including quantities, geologic and soils investigations including slide areas, and foundation plans.

- (4) A unified development review process will be followed, combining the Use Permit (or Planned Development Permit), Design Review, Environmental Impact and other appropriate review procedures. Only one permit (either the Use Permit or Planned Development Permit) will be required. Such permit may be denied because it does not conform to the Hillside Design Review Guidelines or to policies or development principles contained in this Specific Plan.
- (5) Use of Planned Unit Development procedures (soon to be adopted by the City) will be required for developments of five or more dwelling units and encouraged for smaller projects. This procedure encourages design flexibility and the probability of greater amounts of functional open space through the clustering of housing.

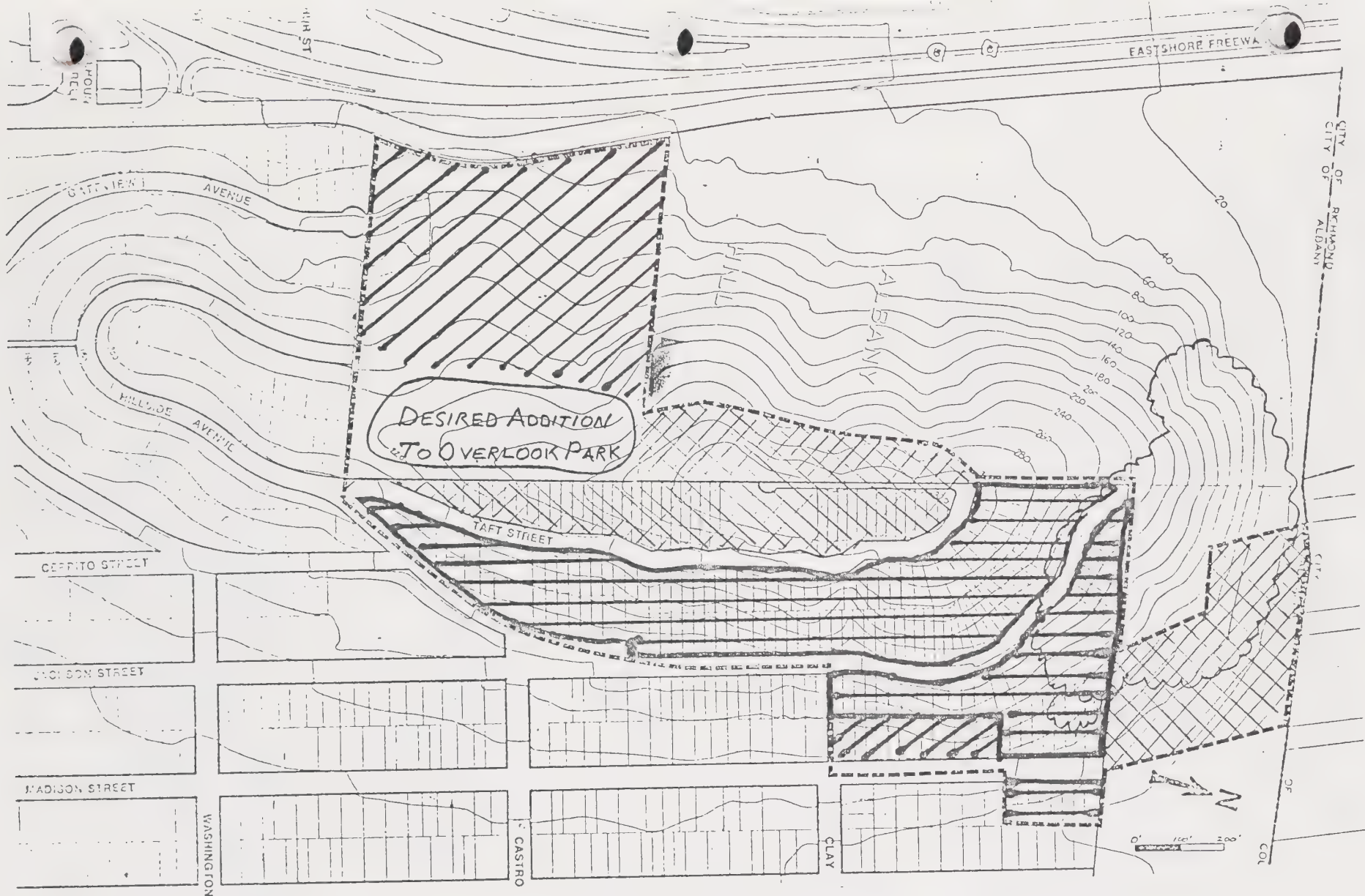
SPECIFIC PLAN MAP

The Specific Plan Map, (Map F), designates appropriate land uses for the Albany Hill area. This represents a review and modification of the Albany General Plan. The Specific Plan Map contains the following items:


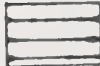
- (1) Parkland. Overlook Park and Creekside Park are included on the map. An addition to Overlook Park is proposed in the eastern portion of the 11-acre parcel on the western side of Albany Hill. This is generally located within the area designated as Open Space Conservation in the Albany General Plan. It would be desirable if this land were dedicated to the City and this could be considered in any future development.
- (2) Moderate Density Residential. The Specific Plan retains the General Plan's density designation of 35 dwelling units per net acre for development on the east side of Albany Hill. This would require approximately 1250 square feet of lot area for each dwelling unit. A 5000 square foot lot (50' X 100') would accommodate four dwelling units.
- (3) Low Density Residential. The area on the western side of Albany Hill is designated for low density residential development. However, it is the policy of this Specific Plan that the development in this area be carried out on a Planned Unit Development basis, with units shifted from the Open Space Conservation area to the area adjacent to Gateview, thereby increasing the density there and creating a transition between the high-rise density of Gateview and the single-family density that now exists south of this site. The overall density on the privately-owned portion of this parcel (excluding the dedication to Overlook Park), would remain 12 dwelling units per net acre.

NOTE*

*Measure D, approved by the voters in November, 1978, reduced the density to 18 dwelling units per acre. This would require approximately 2,420 square feet of lot area per dwelling unit.



MAP F SPECIFIC PLAN MAP

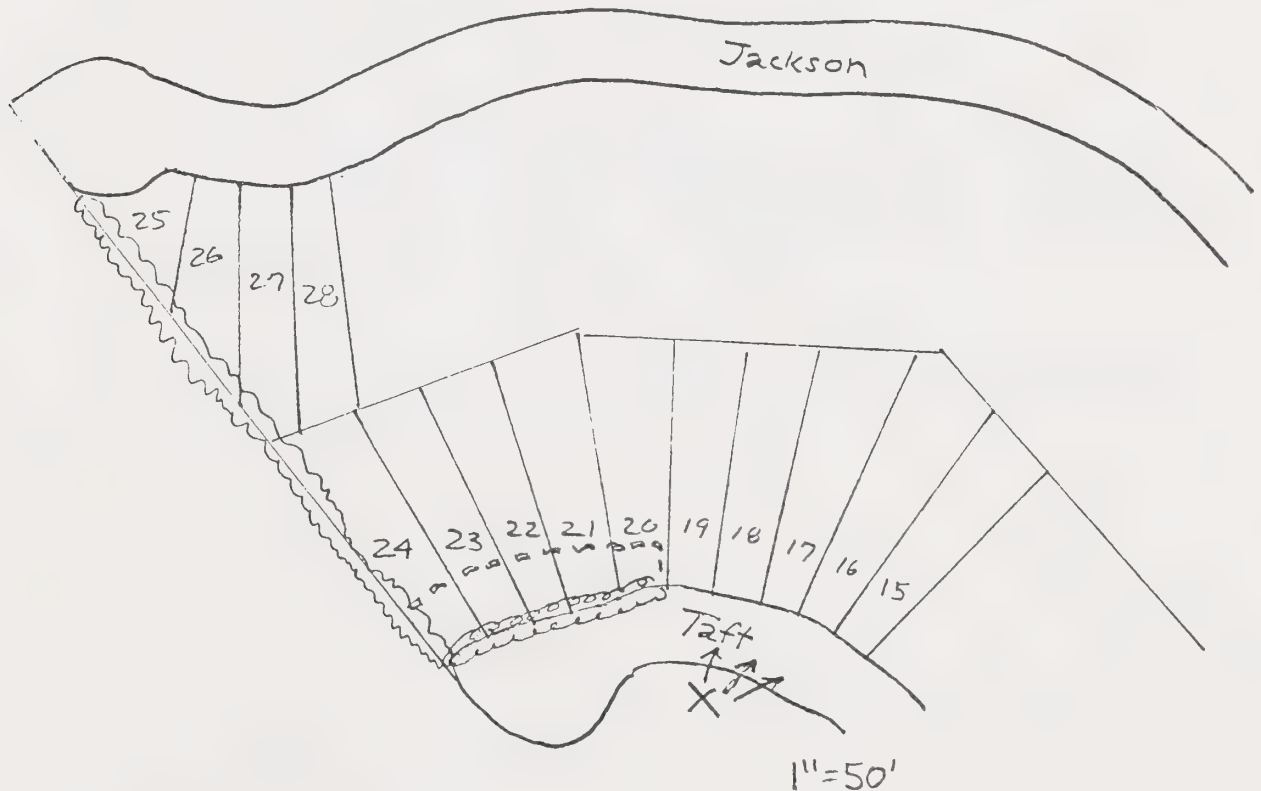
-  Low Density Residential
(12 Dwelling Units/Net Acre)
-  Moderate Density Residential
(18 Dwelling Units/Net Acre)

-  City Parks
-  Oak Forest

ALBANY HILL AREA SPECIFIC POLICIES

The following specific policies are intended to guide development on Albany Hill.

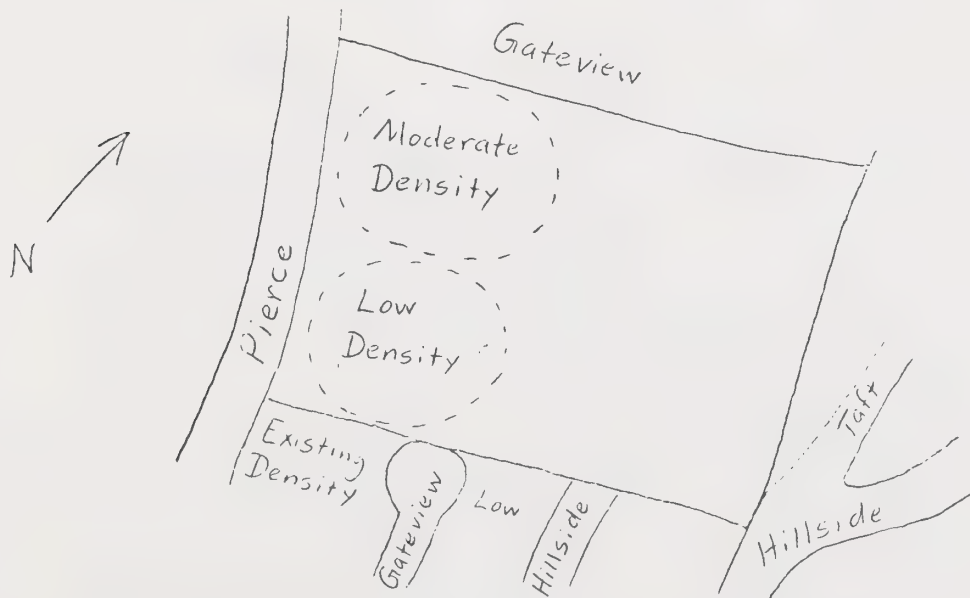
- (1) Environmental Evaluation. Existing City regulations concerning geologic and other environmental impacts of development should be strictly enforced. Environmental impact reports are deemed appropriate for any development within existing major wooded areas of Albany Hill, and areas of identified geologic hazards. Soils and geologic investigations shall continue to be required in geologic hazard areas.
- (2) End of Taft Street. An area of special design consideration was identified at the northern end of Taft Street. See figure below.



This area includes the entrance to the Overlook Park and a portion of the park walkway, but also includes the most readily developable land on Albany Hill in terms of slope constraints. The following Specific Policies are recommended for this area in order to maximize protection of the feeling of openness which exists at the park entrance, to preserve views to the east and northeast, and provide for traffic safety at the cul-de-sac of Taft Street:

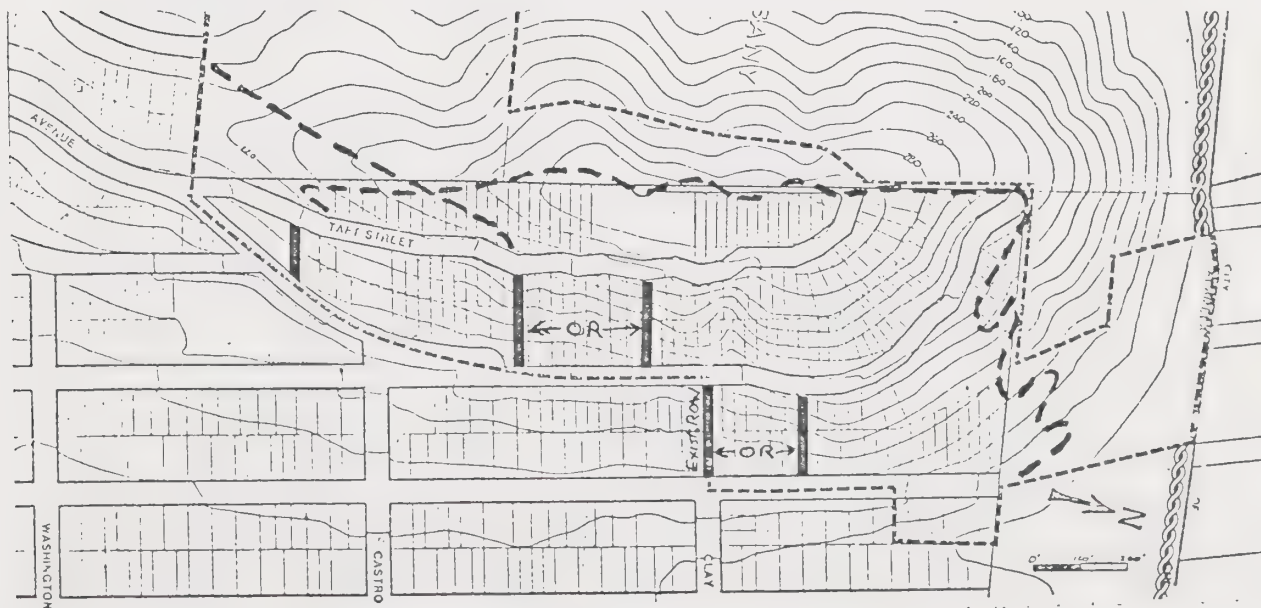
- (a) Lots 20-24 (see figure above) shall retain a setback of 20 feet from the property line.

- (b) Heavy screen plantings shall be made to minimize the visual impact of development upon the park and walkway, for lots 20-27.
 - (c) Development on lots 20-24 should utilize a loop driveway system to avoid problems of cars backing out into the cul-de-sac.
 - (d) For lots 15-19, building heights should be such that views from the park (roughly at "X") will not be lost.
 - (e) Recognizing the difficulty of development of uphill lots on Jackson Street, cluster development utilizing private driveways shall be encouraged for this area.
- (3) Western Slope. The following guidelines are recommended for the 11 acre property on the western side of Albany Hill.
- (a) Retain the wooded nature of the area consistent with the opening of selected view corridors.
 - (b) Minimize road grading and other excavation.
 - (c) Encourage townhouse or other clustered development to maximize open space and minimize grading requirements. The entire parcel should be developed on a master planned basis with a use permit or planned development permit granted for the parcel as a whole.
 - (d) Development should be clustered in the western portion of the site with higher densities permitted adjacent to the Gateview project, as indicated on the schematic diagram presented below.



Any development proposed within the moderate density area should only be approved if the view of the bay from the top of the hill is preserved.

- (e) The area indicated in the General Plan as Open Space - Conservation shall be preserved in its natural state; it would be desirable if at least a portion of this area were dedicated to the City as an addition to the Overlook Park. If such parkland is acquired by the City, it should be designed to provide access from the end of Hillside Avenue. In any case, no development should be approved within 200 feet of the ridgeline to preserve the view from the top of the hill, as indicated in the General Plan.
- (f) Other appropriate guidelines in this report shall apply to development of this property.
- (4) Circulation. With respect to circulation, the Albany Hill Area Specific Plan represents the following specific policies:
- (a) Retain the non-through character of Gateview, Hillside, Taft, Jackson, and Madison Streets.
- (b) In order to provide access to the 11 acre parcel on the west side of the hill, Gateview and Hillside Avenues should be extended as cul-de-sacs only if necessary or desirable to minimize grading and other environmental impacts. Primary access to this parcel should probably be from Pierce Street. The final street configuration will depend in large part on the development plan proposed for this parcel. In any case, Gateview and Hillside should not be connected to Pierce Street.
- (c) A pedestrian stairway system should be developed to encourage pedestrian access to areas on the hill as indicated on the following Pedestrian Circulation Map. Parkland trails are also on the Map.



PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION MAP

- Park Trails
- Pedestrian Stairway (approximate location)
- ~~~~~ Pedestrian Walkway (not necessarily paved)

- (d) The unimproved Madison Street right-of-way should be improved to provide access to Creekside Park, where a small parking facility may be provided. This improvement should be carried out in conjunction with development of the adjacent vacant parcels.
- (e) The existing City right-of-way between the ends of Taft and Jackson Streets should be retained for emergency access only.
- (5) Bicycle Route. Designate Madison Street between Solano Avenue and Creekside Park as a City Bicycle Route, and consider extension of a bicycle path from the park to Pierce Street. This would establish Creekside Park as a bicycle destination point and make possible a loop bikeway around Albany Hill.
- (6) Open Space Lands. The City should seek agreements with property owners adjacent to the parks to allow public use and/or management of open space lands. Specifically:
 - (a) Seek an agreement with Interstate General Corporation or its grantees to allow public use of the 18 acres of hill open space retained in private ownership. Of particular value would be a bicycle path between Creekside Park and Pierce Street, and a footpath from Creekside Park around the western side of the hill, connecting ultimately to the hilltop. Also, with regard to the direct trail link between Creekside and Overlook Parks indicated on Map G, good trail construction standards may require that a portion of this trail cross a small portion of IGC land.
 - (b) Seek agreements with adjacent property owners on Jackson and Madison Streets to assure maximum protection of the remaining oak woodland, following development of these properties.
 - (c) As described in policy (3) above, a portion of the open space area of the 11 acre property on the western side of Albany Hill should be dedicated to the City at the time the property is developed.
- (7) Public Parkland. Both Creekside Park and Overlook Park should remain essentially as open space areas without intensive development. Overlook Park's main uses should be walking, informal picnicking, and viewing the surrounding bay area. Therefore, the park development activities should include a system of pedestrian walks, some benches, the cleanup, removal, and trimming of some trees to open up views of the surrounding area, and other resource management programs. Minimum development should also occur in Creekside Park, such as pedestrian walkways, a creekside bikepath connecting to Pierce Street, picnic areas, a small tot lot at the end of Madison Street, a walking bridge across the creek to El Cerrito, and the provision of access to San Pablo Avenue, if possible.

- (8) The Oak Forest Area. This area should be preserved. Where a portion of the forest area covers the entire property of a single landowner, the City should pursue efforts to achieve the donation of this land to the City. Where the forest area only covers a portion of a single landowner's property, the City should attempt to preserve this forest land during the development approval process. Joint development proposals by two or more landowners, on a Planned Unit Development basis, are encouraged especially if the objective of preserving this valuable open space resource area can be more easily achieved.
- (9) Height. Building height regulations and Design Review Guidelines are contained in the proposed Hillside Development District regulations and the Hillside Design Review Guidelines. However, through the Use Permit/Design Review process, increases to these basic standards may be granted, but only if:
- (a) views from areas uphill from the development will not be impaired;
 - (b) views of the hill are enhanced by providing a variety in building design or by breaking up monotonous rear portions of existing structures;
 - (c) increased height encourages the provision of moderate income units. The burden of proof shall be on the applicant.

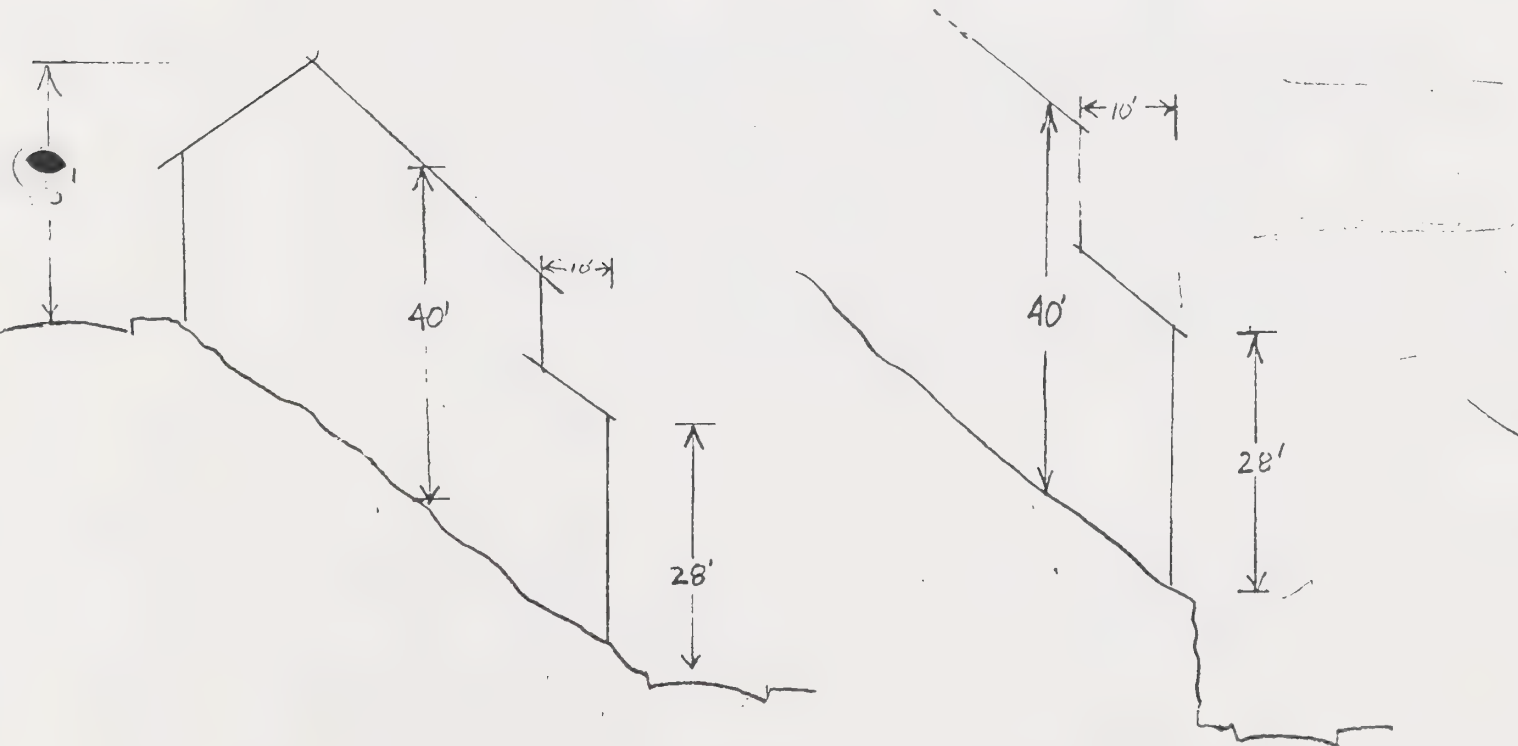
Other relevant specific policies, such as the height limitations in the area directly across the street from Overlook Park, should also be followed.

- (10) Off-Street Parking. Parking spaces conforming to Zoning Ordinance dimensions shall be provided as follows:
- (a) density of fewer than 27 dwelling units per acre requires one and one-half spaces for each unit;
 - (b) each unit in excess of 27 dwelling units per acre shall have two off-street parking spaces.

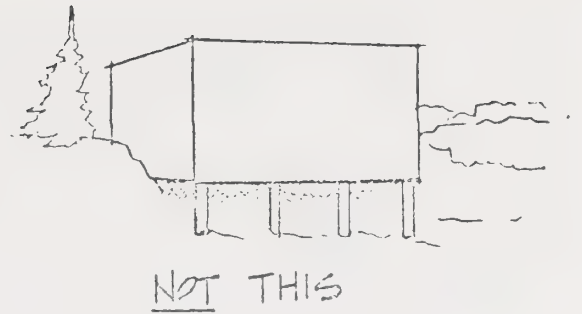
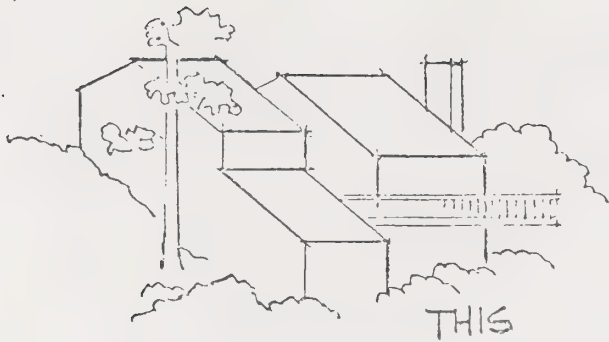
HILLSIDE DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES AND DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

The City's existing Design Review Criteria and Standards (contained in Article 3, Section 14.6 of the City's Zoning Ordinance), should be amended to include the following guidelines specifically addressing development on Albany Hill.

- (a) Height. The basic height requirement, as indicated in the proposed Hillside Development District Regulations, is that no portion of the roof of any structure shall be higher than 40 feet above the original grade of the hill measured vertically from the point of measurement. In addition, for development on the downhill side of a street, the highest point of any structure shall not be greater than 28 feet above the elevation of the uphill street. For development located on the uphill side of a street, no portion of the structure within ten feet of the downhill face of the structure shall be greater than 28 feet above the elevation of the downhill street, or greater than 28 feet above the original grade if located on top of a bluff adjacent to the street. See diagram below.

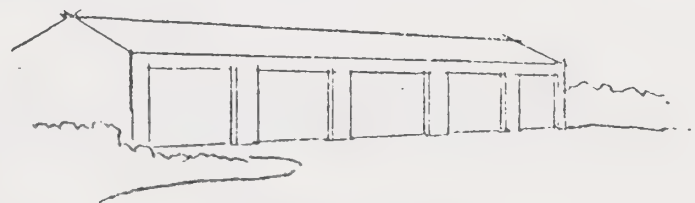


The objective of this basic height regulation is to insure development which blends in with the contours of the hill and is intended only as a minimum regulation. In addition, buildings and foundations should be stepped to reflect the natural slope; excessive support members or mechanical systems should be covered or screened; roof surfaces should also reflect the natural slope. See diagram on next page.



As indicated in the earlier section on Specific Policies, the basic height limitation may be varied under certain circumstances. The design review considerations in this regard include the possibility that taller buildings and trees at the base of the east side of the hill can serve to screen the monotonous and bleak rear elevations of uphill development without destroying the view from those developments. On the west side of the hill, appropriate building heights can provide an attractive transition from the lower density development on the south to the higher density Gateview project on the north, without any adverse impact on either.

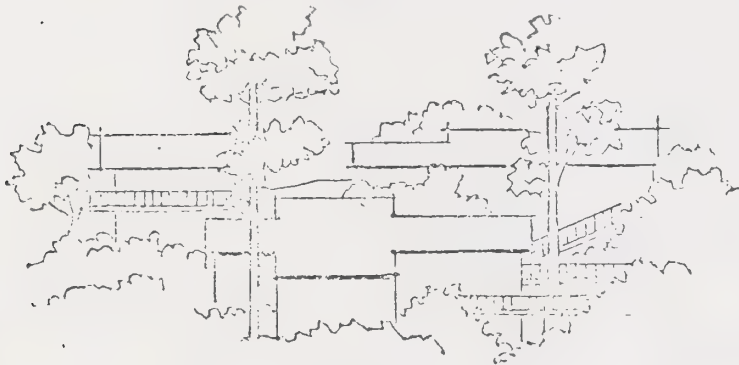
- (b) Curb Cuts and Garage Facade. A solid facade of garage space on the street frontage should be avoided both as a matter of good design and to retain as much on-street parking as possible. Consideration should be given to maximizing the provision of on-street parking between curb cuts. (The proposed HD District Regulations state that no more than two-thirds of any street frontage may be curb cut). The curb cuts and retained curb may be clustered so as to make possible the preservation of mature trees and other features. Long driveways are acceptable if it can be demonstrated that there will be no adverse environmental effects and that excessive grading will not be required.



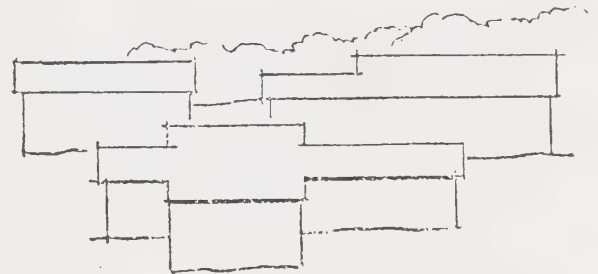
- (c) Colors and Materials. All hill development shall utilize colors or materials which will be harmonious with the surrounding natural or created landscape, and with neighboring developments.
- (d) Yard and Setback Areas. Yard and setback requirements shall be as provided for in the Use Permit/Design Review process with the objective of preserving existing vegetation, view

corridors (both from the hill and of the hill), and natural drainages. Cluster development is encouraged. Total lot coverage shall not exceed fifty percent of the parcel.

- (e) Landscaping. Retention and planting of trees and other vegetation will be a special consideration in the Design Review process. Major concerns with landscaping are appearance from below, appearance from street grade, and preservation of existing trees. Landscaping shall be used below buildings to screen utility areas, etc., and to break up building facades and promote a feeling of "woods" on the hill. Coast redwood, coast live oak, bigleaf maple, buckeye, and fire-resistant shrubs are recommended for this purpose and for their drought-resistant qualities. Bay and hill views are important assets to hill development, so careful consideration of species selected and of siting should be made so as not to block views.



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NOT THIS

Landscaping shall be used at street grade to soften the appearance of buildings. Drought-resistant, spreading trees (such as grevillea, pittosporum, eucalyptus - except blue gum - or live oak), or arborescent vines are recommended for this purpose. Existing trees and other native vegetation, including areas of native grassland, (see Map C), shall be preserved to the greatest extent feasible. The removal of living trees above five feet in height requires a permit on undeveloped parcels.

Plans for landscaping should be in sufficient detail, indicating the location and type of all varieties to be planted, and should be included with the early preliminary application for development approval.

- (f) Utilities. All utilities shall be underground.
- (g) Special Housing Concerns. In all Planned Developments, the needs and convenience of handicapped persons should be provided for, both in terms of interior design and exterior access. Special consideration should be given to housing which fulfills the needs of senior citizens.
- (h) Smaller Unit. Smaller units, containing fewer bedrooms, are encouraged.

- (i) Grading. Plans for grading should also be included with the early preliminary application for development approval. Special engineering studies may be required by the City Engineer. In reviewing the design review aspects of grading plans, the following objectives should be taken into consideration:
- (1) The design, scope, and location of the proposed grading should be compatible with adjacent areas and should result in minimal disturbance of the terrain and natural land features.
 - (2) The grading should preserve, match, or blend with the natural contours and undulations of the land.
 - (3) Trees and native vegetation should be retained to stabilize hillsides, retain moisture, reduce erosion, siltation and nutrient run-off, and to preserve the natural scenic beauty of the area.
 - (4) Scars from cuts and fills should be minimized; the amount of cuts and fills should be reduced and sharp angles at the top and sides of all necessary cut and fill slopes should be rounded off. Where a cut or fill slope occurs between two lots, the slope should normally be made a part of the downhill lot.
 - (5) Geologic hazards and adverse soil conditions should be mitigated.
 - (6) All cleared slopes in cuts and fills and other areas vulnerable to erosion should be stabilized.
 - (7) Construction, clearing of vegetation, or disturbance of the soil should be limited to areas of proven stability.
 - (8) Sediment or other material deposited off the site should not exceed that which would have been deposited if the land had been left in its natural state.
 - (9) The natural geologic erosion of hillsides, slopes, graded areas, cleared areas, filled areas, or stream banks should not be exceeded.
 - (10) To the greatest degree possible, topsoil removed in the process of grading should be stored and replaced following completion of the grading operation.
- (j) Hillside Development Principles. In addition to the Design Review Guidelines printed above, the following principles shall be used in reviewing development proposals in the Specific Plan Area:
- (1) Natural topographic features such as drainage swales, slopes, vistas, and natural plant formations, should be retained.

- (2) To retain the natural character of the hillsides, grading and other site preparation should be kept to an absolute minimum. Unavoidable grading should complement natural land forms; mass grading of large pads and excessive terraces should not be permitted.
- (3) All manufactured slopes, other than those constructed in rock, shall be planted or otherwise protected from the effects of storm run-off erosion and shall be benched or terraced as required by the City Engineer to provide for adequate stability. Planting shall be designed to blend the slope with the surrounding terrain and development. Manufactured slopes in rock shall be provided with soil pockets to contain landscaping where appropriate.
- (4) The natural drainage areas shall be left as natural as possible and generally left unfenced to minimize marring the hill slopes. Native rock material should be used where feasible, for drainage, erosion, and flood control. Where concrete is used, native rock should be used as facing material.
- (5) To retain the significant natural features of hillside areas, densities should diminish as the slope of the terrain increases, or as native woodland cover increases.
- (6) Development should be planned to fit the topography, soils, geology, hydrology, and other conditions of the site.
- (7) Disruption of existing plant and animal life should be minimized.
- (8) To protect lives and property, development on unstable slopes subject to erosion and deterioration should not be permitted unless adequate mitigating measures are carried out.
- (9) Streets and access drives should follow the natural topography to minimize the scarring effects of hillside street construction. Streets and access drives should be allowed to be as narrow as traffic generation and public safety (including emergency vehicle access) will permit.
- (10) Innovative architecture, landscaping, circulation, and site design should be encouraged.
- (11) Concern should be demonstrated for the view of the hills as well as the view from the hills.
- (12) Erosive energy of storm runoff from roofs, etc., should be adequately dissipated.

APPENDIX: PROPOSED REVISION TO ZONING ORDINANCE TO
CREATE HILLSIDE DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

SECTION XXXX HILLSIDE DEVELOPMENT OR HD DISTRICT

The HD District is intended to be applied in the area included in the Albany Hill Area Specific Plan. The regulations applied to development in the HD District are intended to insure that precautions are taken to prevent the excessive removal of vegetation, to insure the enforcement of adequate grading controls to prevent erosion, and to insure aesthetic development compatible both with existing development and the public and private open space areas on Albany Hill. The specific regulations contained in this section and the general rules set forth in Sections xxxx to xxxx shall apply in the HD District.

SECTION XXX.1 PURPOSE

The purpose of this Section is to provide standards for hillside development, and principles for the review of such development, so that any development which may be approved in the Hillside Development District will be compatible both with the Albany General Plan and the Albany Hill Area Specific Plan. In addition, this section has the following specific purposes:

- (a) To preserve, enhance and promote the existing and future appearance and resources of the hillside area.
- (b) To preserve and enhance the beauty of the landscape by encouraging the maximum retention of natural topographic features such as drainage swales, slopes, ridge lines, vistas, trees, and natural plant formations.
- (c) To maximize safety and human enjoyment while adopting development to and taking advantage of the best use of the natural terrain.
- (d) To minimize the water run-off and soil erosion problems incurred in adjustment of terrain to meet development needs.
- (e) To minimize grading and cut-and-fill operations to a point consistent with the retention of the natural character of hillside areas and to prohibit, insofar as is feasible and reasonable, padding or terracing of building sites in the hillside area.

SECTION XXX.2 CONDITIONALLY PERMITTED USES

The following uses may be permitted upon the granting of a conditional Use Permit pursuant to the procedures at Section xxx or a Planned Development Permit pursuant to the procedures at Section xxx:

(a) Residential Uses

Single-family; Two-family; Multi-family Dwellings

(b) Public and Quasi-public Uses

Parks and Other Recreational Facilities

SECTION XXX.3 OTHER REGULATIONS

- (a) Minimum Lot Area: 3750 Square Feet.
- (b) Density: As specified in the Albany Hill Area Specific Plan.
- (c) Minimum Lot Width: Thirty-five (35) feet.
- (d) Minimum Yards: As set forth in Use Permit or Planned Development Permit.
- (e) Maximum Lot Coverage: Fifty percent (50%).
- (f) Maximum Building Height: No portion of any structure shall extend above 40 feet from the original grade as measured vertically from said point. In addition, for development on the downhill side of a street, the highest point of any structure shall not be greater than 28 feet above the elevation of the uphill street. For development located on the uphill side of a street, no portion of the structure within 10 feet of the downhill face of the structure shall be greater than 28 feet above the elevation of the downhill street, or greater than 28 feet above the original grade if located on top of a bluff adjacent to the street. This requirement may be varied as part of the Use Permit/Design Review Procedure.
- (g) Off-Street Parking: One and one-half spaces per dwelling unit for the first 27 dwelling units per acre; two spaces per unit for additional units.
- (h) Curb Cut: Curb cuts shall not exceed two-thirds of the adjacent street frontage.
- (i) Signs: No signs other than house signs shall be permitted.
- (j) Removal of Vegetation: No living trees greater than five feet in height shall be removed unless a permit is granted. Trees on parcels on which development already exists shall be exempt from this provision.

The portion of the site area left in its natural state shall not be disturbed subject to the following exception: Vegetation may be removed, if based on a plan approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission, to thin out excessively heavy growth in order to foster improved re-growth conditions, to remove diseased plant material, or to eliminate a hazardous condition, provided that the removal does not result in bare slopes or create unstable soil conditions.

- (k) Planned Unit Development Procedure: All development within the HD District consisting of five dwelling units or more shall be subject to the Planned Unit Development Procedure set forth in Section xxxx.

- (1) Approval of Grading Permit: No grading permit shall be issued by the City for any location in the HD District without the approval of the City Engineer who shall insure that the issuance of the permit will not result in effects inconsistent with the purposes of this Article. Approval of the permit shall be contingent on the following conditions:
- (1) The design, scope and location of the grading and excavation will cause minimum disturbance of the terrain and natural features of the land.
 - (2) All persons performing any grading and excavation operations shall put into effect all necessary safety precautions to minimize erosion, protect any water course and other natural feature, protect the health and welfare of all persons and protect private and public property from damage of any kind.
 - (3) The City shall place certain conditions on time limits and necessary site restoration, and shall undertake measures to assure fulfillment of such conditions for any grading and excavation work.
- (m) Development Approval: No development in the HD District shall be approved unless it is consistent with the purposes of this Section, the Albany Design Review Guidelines, including the Hillside Design Review Guidelines and Development Principles, the Albany General Plan, and the Albany Hill Area Specific Plan.

U.C. BERKELEY LIBRARIES



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